the weekly
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The Great Liberator

FRED BARNES
JEFFREY BELL
ANDREW FERGUSON
DAVID GELERNTER
IRVING KRISTOL
HARVEY C. MANSFIELD
NATAN SHARANSKY

RONALD REAGAN
1911 – 2004

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The "Alleged Beheading" of Nicholas Berg

Michael Berg, father of Nick Berg, the young American who was decapitated on videotape by the "Iraqi resistance" last month, holds "the Bush administration" responsible for "callous behavior," which he claims contributed to Nick's death. The 1,300-some-odd rain-soaked war protesters who heard the senior Berg say as much on June 5—at a rally in Washington's Lafayette Square Park across the street from the White House—appeared to agree.

Others in the war-protester community do not agree, however. Specifically, there's at least one opponent of U.S. Mideast policy who doesn't agree that Nicholas Berg is dead at all, necessarily. A fellow named Samir G. Jerez, a "cyber counselor" and "certified Islamic chaplain" active in South Florida, has posted an open letter on *IslamOnline.net*, the popular web clearinghouse, in which he complains about the great to-do over this "alleged beheading of an American Jew, Nick Berg." Everybody's "jumping to conclusions," Jerez fumes, "without proof, with inadequate evidence."

And certain "groups who claim to represent Muslims in America" are among the worst offenders. One such group, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), is currently circulating a petition by which American Muslims can "repudiate and dissociate ourselves from . . . such brutal and un-Islamic acts." But CAIR thereby "promotes a message of pacifism to Muslims in the U.S. and around the world" at a time when "Islam's instructions to fight oppression and invasion" have never been more relevant, Jerez argues. Would a truly sincere Muslim advocacy organization "work to stifle assertive positions such as this," he asks?

Which is a rather better question than it might at first appear, at least with respect to CAIR, the immediate target of Jerez's ire. For CAIR has not always been so quick to "repudiate and dissociate ourselves from any Muslim group or individual who commits such brutal and un-Islamic acts." In March 2002, for example, after federal terrorism investigators executed raids on a series of businesses and nonprofits associated with Abdurahman Alamoudi—founder of the American Muslim Council and past president of the American Muslim Federation—CAIR heatedly denounced the action: "The Muslim community is deeply concerned about what appears to be a fishing expedition by federal authorities using McCarthy-like tactics in a search for evidence of wrongdoing that does not exist."

Alamoudi has since been indicted as a principal conspirator in a network said to have raised $54 million here in the States, more than $26 million of which has been shipped overseas to groups such as Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and al Qaeda. And just last week, the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* reported that Alamoudi has admitted extensive, personal involvement in a plot by Libya's Muammar Qaddafi to assassinate Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia.

No word yet from the good people at CAIR about this development. ♦

Nostalgie de la Bush

From the June 9 edition of CNN's *Larry King Live*:

KING: Good evening. It's a great honor for us to be at the Houstonian Hotel in Houston, Texas, to talk with the 41st president of the United States and his wife, the former first lady. George Herbert Walker Bush and Barbara Bush. We have been with them on many occasions. This is one of the sadder ones, the death of Ronald Reagan. . . . [T]he two of you, of course, all of you are going to be interconnected forever in history. You were his vice president. We'll get into a lot of that. One thing I want to talk about right away is this Saturday night, you're going to turn 80. Your 80th birthday party is here in Houston at Minute Maid Park. I'm proud to be the emcee of this. You're going to jump out of a parachute—you're going to jump with a parachute, not out of a parachute—the next day. . . . Were there any thoughts of canceling?

G. BUSH: Well, I think there was some thought, and then we said, 'Look, after a week of mourning, a week of great sadness, life goes on.' And in this case, we've got five world leaders, former world leaders, coming here. We've got 5,000 people. We've got a lot of planning that went into it. And so I think in the final analysis, the [organizing] committee decided that it should go on. And I think that was the right decision. . . .

KING: And what's [Reagan's] legacy?

G. BUSH: I don't know, Larry.

B. BUSH: Decency.

G. BUSH: Yes, all those personal attributes—

B. BUSH: Giving hope. He gave huge hope to this country.

G. BUSH: Yes, "morning in America," "we're the greatest," "we're the best"—without putting anyone else down.

KING: And that wasn't PR, right?

B. BUSH: No.

KING: That's what his—

G. BUSH: It's in his heart, yes. It was in his heart, America the free—home of the free, [unintelligible] of the brave. I mean, he loved all that. And he conveyed it to the American people. . . .

KING: Always great seeing you.

G. BUSH: Excuse my left hand, I've

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got a sprained thumb. And this is the hand that pulls the parachute. ♦

The Way We Die Now

Folks who pay attention to local news here in Washington, D.C., have been shaking their heads in disbelief over the May 30 murder of 18-year-old Michael Antonio Bassett, a "good student" and "a very nice kid" from a not-especially-nice part of suburban Prince George's County, Maryland. The crime was gruesome: After a late Saturday night spent out with friends, Bassett stopped by a local 7-Eleven, where he apparently fell into conversation with—and offered to buy a Slurpee for—a girl he'd never met. The gesture offended a group of bystanders, who proceeded to chase Bassett down and beat him unconscious in the middle of Silver Hill Road. His body was then run over by at least two cars.

Senseless violence? Not to Deborah A. Franklin, who'd been Bassett's assistant principal at Oxon Hill High School. "We're very devastated by Michael's death," Franklin told the *Washington Post*, adding that she could "'just imagine him trying to do something kind for the young lady,' and then, in apologizing, trying to put into practice the peer mediation techniques taught at the school to defuse disputes. 'Maybe someone else had not quite matured enough to learn that,' she said."

It's a theory, anyway. ♦

Mostly Sincere Apologies, Cont.

In last week's episode, THE SCRAPBOOK was kinda-sorta pleased to make amends—at the request of Billy Kimball, the just-married executive producer of Air America's *O'Franken Factor*—for having bollixed up a passing reference to his new father-in-law. This week, THE SCRAPBOOK is pleased to make further amends—without even being asked!—for having originally referred to Kimball as an "evidently hard-luck groom" with a "questionably dependable source of income." For the record: Liberal talk-radio network Air America no doubt remains a questionably dependable source of income for many or most of its employees. But it seems the hardly hard-luck Billy Kimball needn't worry about stuff like that.

"Some men who like custom-made suits gathered for dinner the other night in the Dunhill store on Fifth Avenue," the *New York Post* reports. "Jay McInerney and Tim (Le Sportsac) Schifter hosted Bruno, their tailor." Also present were "Jay's editor Gary Fisketjon," "best-dressed lawyer Ed Hayes," "polo player Adam Lindeman," "*Vogue* publisher Tom Florio," "Four Seasons co-owner Julian Niccolini," and . . . yep, that's right: "Air America's Billy Kimball (who just married the beautiful Alexandra Hamilton)." A 1995 Grande Dame Veuve Clicquot was served and cigars were smoked.

THE SCRAPBOOK ultra-sincerely regrets having previously failed to report that Mr. Kimball is a silly person. ♦

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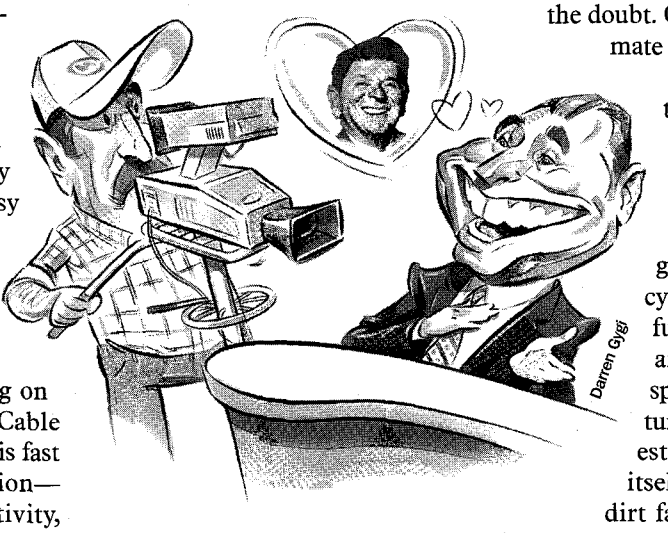
Casual

Me and Reagan

My favorite book title of all time is *Sukarno: An Autobiography As Told To Cindy Adams*, which was published by Bobbs-Merrill in the 1960s and later, so I've heard, reissued as *Me and Sukarno* by Cindy Adams. Not even *Sukarno and Me*. Ms. Adams, of course, is as highly respected a gossip columnist as you are likely to find, and the effect of her book's title—which commingles the importance of a man who governed a country of 100 million souls with the self-importance of a tabloid reporter who interviewed him long enough to get a book out of it—strikes a plummy note. It neatly sums up the uneasy relationship between those who achieve greatness and those who try really, really hard to get somebody to thrust greatness upon them.

You could see the same thing on display on TV all last week. Cable news channels lapsed into what is fast becoming their natural condition—a kind of frenetic pseudo-activity, furious and empty busy-ness, in which the amount of airtime the producers have to fill is unimaginably greater than the amount of information they have to fill it with. After the sixtieth or seventieth replay of Ronald Reagan at the Berlin Wall, I found myself thinking, heretically, "Aw, tear it down yourself, already." Much worse than the shopworn clips were the former Reaganites who emerged from the Washington lagoon unbidden. Swamp water dripping from their J. Press pinstripes, seaweed draped around their Ann Taylor ensembles, they huddled outside the studios of MSNBC and CNN and Fox News, hoping for a little airtime. Of course they were not disappointed. Everybody was escorted into the studios and put on the air for a few moments at least, and often those precious moments grew into hours.

I have lived in Washington a long time and, as they say in the interrogation room, many of these persons are known to me personally. But I was astonished at the intimacy each had enjoyed with Reagan himself. From junior politicians and special assistants and advance men on the distant end, to campaign consultants and cabinet secretaries on the near—all were pleased to testify, modestly, about the real Reagan they knew and about their own closeness to the great man, notwithstanding that anyone familiar with Reagan's way of life will know that even at the height of his mental acuity he couldn't have picked a single one of these people out of a police lineup. It's a funny thing about greatness: We always hear how rare it is, but when it finally appears, there always seems to be enough to rub off on everybody.



As it happens, I am in possession of my own Reagan memories, which I uncork at the slightest provocation and which, I've noticed, grow richer in detail as the years pass. A few guests and I had dinner with him once at the home of R. Emmett Tyrrell Jr., who captured the evening much better than I ever could in his book *The Conservative Crack-Up*. I shook the president's hand at a White House party and saw him give a dozen speeches. Though I was under no professional urgency to do so, I made a point, as a reporter, of attending all his press conferences. For a Reagan admirer, these could be painful affairs, especially during the Iran-contra scandal, when the scorpions of the press circled round him in the White House East Room and seemed to delight in his increasing befuddlement. But I always thought he came out ahead in the encounters. I was happy to give him the benefit of the doubt. One always will for an intimate friend.

Intimacy, no matter how tenuous or bogus, only grows in retrospect, especially after that sad day when it can no longer be enlarged in fact. This lily-gilding is a human tendency that predates the worshipful Reaganites, of course, and even Cindy Adams, spanning cultures and centuries, dipping into the earliest wellsprings of celebrity itself. The story is told of a dirt farmer in Columbus, New Mexico, who was seized in a raid by Pancho Villa's men. He was brought before Villa, who sat imperiously atop his mount in the village square, devouring his lunch.

The farmer begged for his life. Villa pointed to a nearby horsepie. "You eat that," Villa said with a sadistic grin, "and I will spare your life." Horribly, the farmer did as he was told. Villa kept his word, and the man returned to his farm.

Years later, the farmer's grandchildren came to him in excitement. "Grandpa," they said, "is it true you once saw the great Villa?"

"Saw him?" the old man replied. "I had lunch with him!"

Andrew Ferguson

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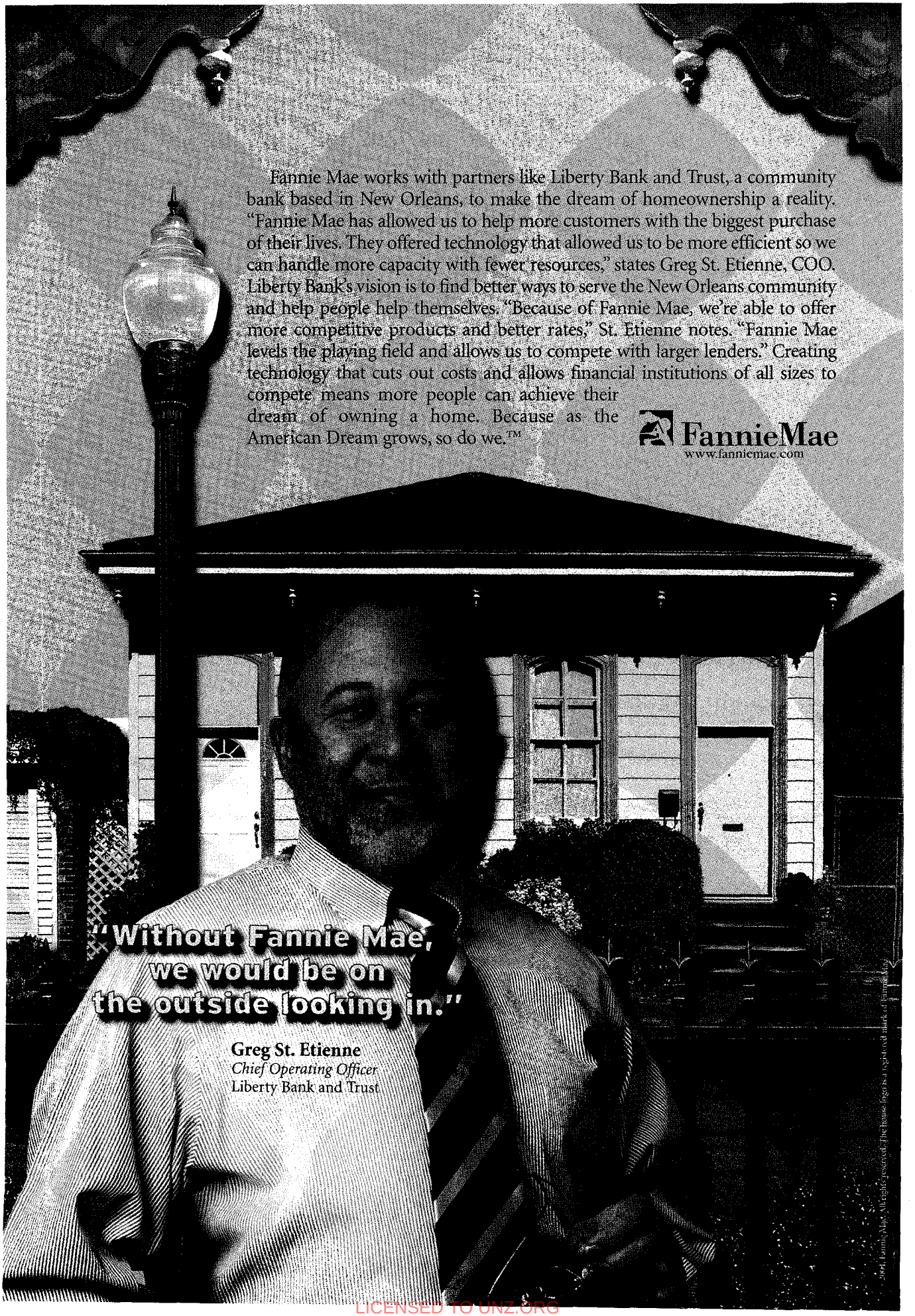

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Unflacked

Bob Kohn's review of Alan Shipnuck's *The Battle for Augusta* ("Bad *Times*," May 24) claims that Augusta National Golf Club public relations agent Jim McCarthy inspired me (and other web journalists) to attack the *New York Times* for its saturation coverage of Martha Burk's campaign against the men-only club.

According to Kohn's review, McCarthy funneled information beneficial to his client to "about a dozen bloggers and media critics, including Andrew Sullivan, Mickey Kaus, Jack Shafer, and Jim Romenesko." Kohn finishes the paragraph by writing, "the seeds sown by McCarthy brought forth a full crop of [anti-*Times*] criticism from the blogging community."

The implication here is that McCarthy's whisperings caused me to write about the *Times* and Augusta. Not so. By the time McCarthy first contacted me, I had already written two pieces about the *Times*'s coverage. My third piece contains nothing from McCarthy's seed bank. If you don't believe me, ask McCarthy.

Where did Kohn get the idea that my articles were products of McCarthy's flackery? It's not in Shipnuck's book. My guess is that he carelessly conflated a couple of paragraphs separated by a few pages to arrive at his dead-wrong assertion.

Jack Shafer
Editor at Large, Slate
Washington, DC

Democrats Unite

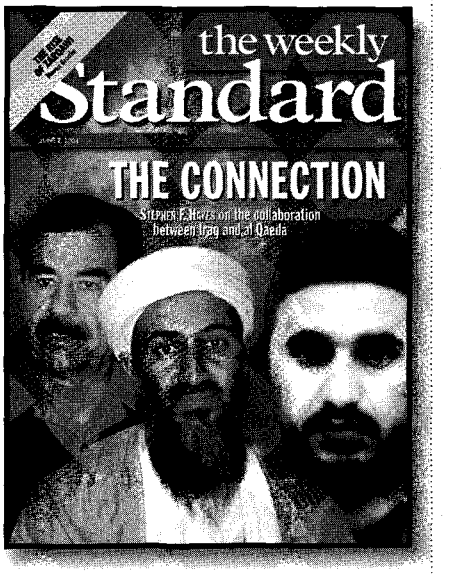
Hooray for David Gelernter! His masterful piece ("It's America's War," May 24) forcefully reminded us of the parallels between President Bush's current problems with the war in Iraq and the trials and tribulations endured by Winston Churchill during World War II. Those of us who were adults in the 1940s recall vividly Churchill's dogged determination to fight on and win despite British defeat after defeat, as well as Parliament's several failed attempts to depose their beleaguered yet steadfast leader. Britons were united behind Churchill, and they eventually prevailed. Such is the lesson for the faint of heart in the United States.

Gelernter wrote, "For the world to know that this nation is united, Democrats have to speak. They haven't. The message has not been delivered." Let's hope Ted Kennedy, Tom Daschle, Nancy Pelosi, and Carl Levin read The Weekly Standard. (Then again, maybe that's asking too much.)

Charlotte Kincaid
Bixby, OK

Reuters-Rooter

It is amusing to me that Dan Dunsky, writing an article about covering multiple points of view, never bothered to



contact Reuters for a comment on his distorted view of our reporting ("Journalists and Their Fallacies," May 24). Worse yet, he selectively quoted from our stories to try to prove a point.

When doing "vox pop" stories we take great pains to try to track down at least one or two people who have a more positive view, to give an alternative view to the great majority of Iraqis we speak to who are very critical of the occupation. It is not easy to find positive voices, as any journalist who has been to Baghdad will know. The last year has seen growing disillusionment with the occupation at all levels of Iraqi society, and this growing disillusionment and anger has been accurately reported by Reuters—and indeed covered by almost all other media here. It is a key part of the Iraq story.

Our commitment to accurate reporting is paramount, and our bureaus around the world—including in Iraq—live up to that pledge. I would be pleased if your readers learned the complete story.

David Schlesinger
Global Managing Editor, Reuters
New York, NY

Wheels of Fortune

Barry D. Halpern's concern in "The Wheels of Military Justice . . ." that the Army's hurried prosecution of the Abu Ghraib crimes could cast doubt on the verdicts is well founded (May 24). One way to limit this problem in the future would be to take military prosecution out of the hands of the uniformed services and place it with the Justice Department. Although this would run counter to several hundred years of established Anglo-American military tradition, there are sound reasons for doing so.

Jonathan F. Keiler
Bowie, MD

Moore Problems

In "Michael Moore and Me" (May 31), Fred Barnes states that Al Franken, given his interest in "Lying Liars," should investigate Michael Moore's distortions. But let's not forget the interest Franken has shown in exposing "Big Fat Idiots." After seeing photos of this year's Cannes film festival, I would say Moore qualifies in that regard, too.

Bhaskar Sinha
Davis, CA

• • •

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Thank You, Mr. President

Young America's Foundation would like to thank President Reagan for his service to our country and for his support of our organization's mission to educate youth about conservative ideas.

The Foundation will not cease in teaching his ideas to future generations, keeping his spirit alive, and using his beloved Rancho del Cielo, the Reagan Ranch, to instruct and inspire the leaders of tomorrow.

We will miss you, Mr. President.

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the weekly Standard

The Great Liberator

We have lost a great president, a great American, and a great man. And I have lost a dear friend. In his lifetime Ronald Reagan was such a cheerful and invigorating presence that it was easy to forget what daunting historic tasks he set himself. He sought to mend America's wounded spirit, to restore the strength of the free world, and to free the slaves of communism. These were causes hard to accomplish and heavy with risk.

Yet they were pursued with almost a lightness of spirit. For Ronald Reagan also embodied another great cause—what Arnold Bennett once called "the great cause of cheering us all up." His politics had a freshness and optimism that won converts from every class and every nation—and ultimately from the very heart of the evil empire.

Yet his humor often had a purpose beyond humor. In the terrible hours after the attempt on his life, his easy jokes gave reassurance to an anxious world. They were evidence that in the aftermath of terror and in the midst of hysteria, one great heart at least remained sane and jocular. They were truly grace under pressure.

And perhaps they signified grace of a deeper kind. Ronnie himself certainly believed that he had been given back his life for a purpose. As he told a priest after his recovery, "Whatever time I've got left now belongs to the Big Fella Upstairs."

And surely it is hard to deny that Ronald Reagan's life was providential, when we look at what he achieved in the eight years that followed. Others prophesied the decline of the West; he inspired America and its allies with renewed faith in their mission of freedom. Others saw only limits to growth; he transformed a stagnant economy into an engine of opportunity. Others hoped, at best, for an uneasy cohabitation with the Soviet Union; he won the Cold War—not only without firing a shot, but also by inviting enemies out of their fortress and turning them into friends.

I cannot imagine how any diplomat, or any dramatist, could improve on his words to Mikhail Gorbachev at the Geneva summit: "Let me tell you why it is we distrust you." Those words are candid and tough and they cannot have been easy to hear. But they are also a clear invitation to a new beginning and a new relationship that would be rooted in trust.

We live today in the world that Ronald Reagan began to reshape with those words. It is a very different world with different challenges and new dangers. All in all, however, it is one of greater freedom and prosperity, one more hopeful than the world he inherited on becoming president.

As prime minister, I worked closely with Ronald Reagan for eight of the most important years of all our lives. We talked regularly both before and after his presidency. And I have had time and cause to reflect on what made him a great president.

Ronald Reagan knew his own mind. He had firm principles—and, I believe, right ones. He expounded them clearly, he acted upon them decisively. . . .

Yet his ideas, though clear, were never simplistic. He saw the many sides of truth. Yes, he warned that the Soviet Union had an insatiable drive for military power and territorial expansion; but he also sensed it was being eaten away by systemic failures impossible to reform. Yes, he did not shrink from denouncing Moscow's "evil empire." But he realized that a man of goodwill might nonetheless emerge from within its dark corridors.

So the president resisted Soviet expansion and pressed down on Soviet weakness at every point until the day came when communism began to collapse beneath the combined weight of these pressures and its own failures. And when a man of goodwill did emerge from the ruins, President Reagan stepped forward to shake his hand and to offer sincere cooperation. Nothing was more typical of Ronald Reagan than that large-hearted magnanimity—and nothing was more American.

Therein lies perhaps the final explanation of his achievements. Ronald Reagan carried the American people with him in his great endeavors because there was perfect sympathy between them. He and they loved America and what it stands for—freedom and opportunity for ordinary people. . . . He never succumbed to the embarrassment some people feel about an honest expression of love of country. He was able to say "God Bless America" with equal fervor in public and in private. And so he was able to call confidently upon his fellow countrymen to make sacrifices for America—and to make sacrifices for those who looked to America for hope and rescue.

With the lever of American patriotism, he lifted up the world. And so today the world—in Prague, in Budapest, in Warsaw, in Sofia, in Bucharest, in Kiev, and in Moscow itself—the world mourns the passing of the Great Liberator and echoes his prayer, "God Bless America."

—Margaret Thatcher's eulogy at the funeral of Ronald Reagan, June 11, 2004

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D-Day, Chirac Style

How France and its allies liberated Germany—and other E.U. fantasies. BY IRWIN M. STELZER

RONALD REAGAN would be proud of George W. Bush. The president so many Americans are now so fondly remembering had to face down a contemptuous foreign policy establishment for years, when the received wisdom was that his policies were a failure. Reagan didn't win the Cold War without setbacks; Bush is now going through a similar rough period with his Middle East policy.

Early on, Ronald Reagan was told by the foreign policy establishment not to upset the status quo in Europe, but to stick to the established policy of containment. He declined, choosing to upset the long-standing policies of his predecessors and go for victory, rather than a standoff in the Cold War. George W. Bush was told by the foreign policy establishment not to upset the status quo in the Middle East, but to stick to the policy of containing Saddam and dealing amicably with the corrupt dictators of the oil-rich region. He declined, choosing instead to go to war to unseat Saddam, and to launch a program to destabilize the region by introducing democratic and economic reforms. Reagan won his bet that the Cold War could be won, and it now looks as if Bush could win his bet that a reformed Iraq can serve as a model for other countries in the Middle East.

But Bush's tenacity, even including his ability to wring from the Security Council a resolution endorsing his Iraq policy, will in the end do little to bring back what are misremembered as the good old days of multilateral cooperation. The president may have taken to calling German chancellor Gerhard Schröder by his first name, and to giving joint press conferences with Chirac, but those moves are designed in part to make nonsense of John Kerry's charge that America is isolated in the world. Franco-American relations remain just about where they were before the June 6 celebrations of the anniversary of the D-Day landings on the beaches of Normandy.

This being Chirac's home turf, he got to set the stage, using $54 million of his taxpayers' money to make certain that the backdrop showed him to advantage. And an ahistorical stage it was. The flags of nations that had nothing to do with the landings were represented, to the surprise of those of us who do not remember Sweden as supporting the Allied cause during World War II. Even the E.U. flag was on parade, although it did not exist on June 6, 1944.

Then, too, watching the weight accorded in the ceremonies to the French contribution on that historic and bloody day, one could easily get the impression that the French self-liberated. Never mind that de Gaulle was not told about the invasion until June 4, or that only 500 of the 156,000 troops involved in the invasion were Free French fighters (who fought very well), far fewer than were then in the service of the Nazis in Vichy France.

Chirac's inflation of the role of France in the D-Day invasion might be chalked up to national pride. But his insistence on including German chancellor Gerhard Schröder in the celebration, despite the fact that German troops were on the hills shooting down at the beaches on which the Allied troops landed, is another matter. The French president was eager to put on display a Franco-German alliance that is forged in steel, and is prepared to be the core of a united Europe that will counter the American hyperpower. Chirac made it clear that the invitation to the German chancellor was designed not only to trumpet the reconciliation between these historic enemies. It was also aimed at giving further impetus to the creation of a European superstate, populated by what Schröder in his remarks called "Citizens of Europe." This new superstate, France believes, will have the population, economic muscle, and geopolitical reach to rival the United States. And when the new European constitution is signed in a few days, the E.U. will become a legal entity, with its own supranational police, court system, foreign policy, and national song. No more unipolar world, say the French, even though the Europeans will continue to direct the bulk of their resources to their welfare states rather than to their militaries.

By way of reciprocation, Schröder thanked "France and its allies" and "Russia" for—in the words of CNN's Christiane Amanpour—"liberating" Germany from the Nazis. No mention of America. The implication that some foreign body had imposed Hitler on an unwilling German populace, and that France had "liberated" Germany probably came as no surprise to experienced CNN and Amanpour fans.

The Chirac-Schröder love-in was a response to attitudes in their own countries—attitudes not independent of the repeated attacks on America by the French and German leaders, skilled practitioners of the art of whipping up anti-American feeling. A poll in *Le Figaro* shows that 82 percent of the French believe the Germans are their best allies; fewer than half of those polled by *Le Parisien* believe that France has a moral debt to the United States. And we don't need polling data

Irwin M. Stelzer is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, *director of economic policy studies at the Hudson Institute, and a columnist for the* Sunday Times *(London).*

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to know the extent of the anti-American feeling that Schröder rode to victory in the last election. Stefan Baron, editor in chief of *Wirtschaftswoche* (a business weekly) writes, "Schröder would like Germany—with the help of Europe—to become a moral power in opposition to America."

But Schröder has a problem. The Eastern European countries that have newly joined the E.U., and are about to take seats in the European parliament and positions in the eurocracy, are staunchly pro-American. As important, they provide promising markets for German products and attractive areas for German investment—facts that have not gone unnoticed by the German industrial community, which is unenthused by Schröder's anti-Americanism, not to mention his reneging on his promise to reform Germany's sclerotic economy.

Schröder also is angling for a permanent seat on the Security Council, a plum he is unlikely to get in almost any circumstance, and certain to be denied if he continues his direct attacks on the United States. So look for a major grovel from here on out, out of sight of German voters if possible. Already, U.S. officials are telling the American press that last week's meeting between Bush and Schröder was their best since the Iraq war. To which the cautious might reply that the Gerhard Schröder who meets privately with the American president in Sea Island, Georgia, is not the same Gerhard Schröder who harangues voters in Berlin, Germany.

As for Chirac, who refused to leave his perch on the top of the steps of the Élysée Palace to welcome Bush, as is customary, he spent D-Day invoking the values of the U.N. A peaceful world order, he told the crowd in Normandy, is "symbolized and guaranteed today by the Charter of the United Nations"—the clear and intended message being that military action that is not authorized by the U.N. is somewhere between illegal and immoral. Bush was having none of it: He countered with references to "all the liberators who fought here"—the WWII coalition of the willing—and added, "America would do it again for our friends," contrasting U.S. reliability with France's more, er, pragmatic approach to world affairs.

Reuters / Landov / Jason Reed

Bush and Chirac at the Élysée Palace, June 5, 2004

Chirac's performance benefited mightily from his tolerance of wide chasms between his words and his deeds. "France will never forget what it owes America," the French president told some 6,000 D-Day veterans and assorted guests in his talk on Sunday in the Norman coastal town of Arromanches. A few days later he opposed America's requests for deeper involvement of NATO in the pacification of Iraq, saying such a move would not be "opportune"; fought to water down Bush's program to foster the growth of democratic institutions in the Middle East, stating that he opposed such "missionary" work; and responded with a vigorous "*non*" to Bush's plea that Iraq's creditors join America in forgiving "the vast majority" of the debts incurred by Iraq during Saddam Hussein's regime. (Within the G-8 nations, Japan is owed $4.1 billion, Russia $3.5 billion, France $3 billion, Germany $2.4 billion, and the United States $2.2 billion.) And just to make certain that none of the anti-American voters at home get any idea that he has moved too close to the Americans, Chirac decided to pass up President Reagan's funeral to keep an unspecified "previous commitment" in Europe.

Apparently, remembering one's debt to America, France's "steadfast friend and ally," and honoring that debt are two different things. Iraq's monetary debt to France must, Chirac insists, be paid, but France's moral debt to America remains in the need-not-repay file.

What has come to be the heads-of-state equivalent of Nathan Detroit's oldest established permanent floating crap game now moves on. It opened in Normandy, moved on to Sea Island, stopped briefly in Washington to honor the memory of the highest roller of

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them all, Ronald Reagan, and is headed for an E.U.-U.S. summit in Newmarket-on-Fergus in County Clare, Ireland, before taking a final bow at a NATO summit in Istanbul on June 27-28.

So far, George W. Bush and Tony Blair are the big winners, and Chirac the biggest loser. Bush, with Blair backing his play, bet that he could rake in support for the U.S.-U.K. policy in Iraq, and won unanimous Security Council backing for the new Iraqi government, headed by Ghazi al-Yawar, who was educated in America. Chirac, with Schröder blowing on his dice, lost, and found himself increasingly isolated as Bush's team emphasized the president's warm personal relationships with Blair, Russian president Vladimir Putin, Japanese prime minister Junichiro Koizumi, and Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi. Indeed, when asked at a press conference preceding the D-Day celebrations whether Chirac is likely to get an invitation to the Bush ranch at Crawford, Texas, the president responded that if Chirac wanted to go there to "stare at cows," he was more than welcome to do so.

Bush bet that he could get the G-8 to support the first step in an initiative to foster democracy in the despotic countries of the Middle East, Chirac bet he would roll snake eyes, only to watch a seven come up. Bush bet that he could get NATO involved in Iraq, Chirac bet that he couldn't, but lost the pot when he had to concede that if the Iraqis ask NATO for help, help would be provided.

On D-Day, in Normandy, the French president was playing with his own dice in his own house, and raked in a few chips—favorable television images but very little to put in the bank. A few days later, on Sea Island, the American president had the hot hand, and walked away with just about every pot, sharing his winnings with his ally, Tony Blair, by agreeing to an effort to revive the Middle East peace process. Not a bad week for a president and a prime minister who only a few weeks ago were being written off as real losers. ♦

Bait and Switch at the U.N.

All of a sudden, sovereignty is all the rage.

BY JEREMY RABKIN

AFTER THE COLLAPSE of communism in the early 1990s, visionaries foresaw a new global consensus. After the "end of history" came, logically, the end of sovereignty. Why would the world need independent governments when everyone agreed on fundamental questions?

Meanwhile, the launching of the European Union seemed to demonstrate that national governments could submit to higher authority on an expanding range of policies, without transferring all the attributes of sovereignty to that higher authority. Sovereignty need not be relocated. It could simply be transcended. The president of the American Society for International Law, a legal scholar of impeccable credentials, urged in 1993 that the very term "sovereignty" should be "banished from polite or educated society."

Now suddenly, the debate about Iraq has come down to squabbling about whether the new interim government will have "full sovereignty." Last week the U.N. Security Council endorsed a U.S.-U.K. resolution "looking forward," in the words of its preamble, "to the . . . assumption of full responsibility and authority by a fully sovereign and independent Interim Government by June 30, 2004." To quell doubts—particularly those expressed by France and Germany—the resolution stipulated that American-led forces in Iraq would remain only so long as the interim government agreed to their presence. Washington and London insisted that by "full sovereignty" they meant full, fully full sovereignty.

So are we all in agreement now that sovereignty is the fundamental principle in international affairs? Not quite. Islamists still preach the restoration of the caliphate, whose authority would extend not only to all territories with predominantly Muslim populations but also to Muslim minorities in other lands. Europeans still enthuse over international authorities with wider reach, such as the International Criminal Court, which is supposed to determine when it is lawful to resort to military action almost anywhere in the world.

Even the Security Council, it turns out, is not always so fussy about the prerogatives of sovereign states. Successive resolutions about Afghanistan, for example, while ritually intoning support for a "sovereign" government there, do not indicate that the continued presence of U.N. peacekeeping forces in that territory is conditioned on the consent of the Afghan government. Resolutions regarding the continuation of an international military presence in Kosovo do not even mention "sovereignty." Technically, Kosovo is still a province of Serbia, but no U.N. resolution has ever suggested that foreign military forces can only remain in Kosovo with the consent of the government in Belgrade.

It is true, of course, that the withdrawal of international peacekeepers from Kosovo might well lead to more anti-Serb violence, provoking new rounds of conflict in the region. In Afghanistan, withdrawal of international peacekeepers might well lead to

Jeremy Rabkin's latest book, The Case for Sovereignty: Why the World Should Welcome American Independence, *has just been published by the American Enterprise Institute.*

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the return of Taliban or terrorist forces. The withdrawal of outside forces, in other words, might produce the very results which the U.N.-authorized deployments are supposed to prevent. So the U.N. has not bothered to pretend that outside forces in these territories are simply there at the sufferance of local sovereigns.

Even in regard to Iraq, the Security Council was not always so squeamish about the claims of sovereignty. It readily agreed to impose unique restrictions on the government of Saddam Hussein, restricting its right to fly aircraft in its own airspace, its right to sell oil without special controls, its right to develop weapons of mass destruction. What the Security Council could not agree on was action by the American-led coalition to overthrow Saddam's tyranny. So the Council now insists that "full sovereignty" must be restored to Iraq at the end of this month.

There is nothing wrong with this in principle. It was always American policy to restore Iraqi independence eventually. The handover of "full sovereignty" on the current schedule—which was formulated by the Bush administration, before it was endorsed by the U.N.—may well help to reassure Iraqis and drain sympathy for terrorist or guerrilla insurgencies. But, as its new prime minister explained to the Security Council, the Iraqi interim government still depends on the American-led coalition to maintain order in the country and defend its borders from terrorist infiltration.

There is something awkward about recognizing the "sovereignty" of a government that lacks the capacity to control its own territory. A government dependent on outside troops does not seem to be independent. Even if one thinks of sovereignty as a legal status, it is a status that normally depends on effective control. Jean Bodin, the 16th-century French jurist who published the first systematic analysis of sovereignty, put the point quite succinctly at the outset: "He who controls the use of force, controls the state."

If the interim government does, on the other hand, demonstrate its full independence by calling for the departure of foreign troops, it may plunge Iraq into still more strife and chaos. As in Afghanistan, the departure of foreign troops might lead to a new terrorist threat, which would nullify the benefits of the original intervention. So perhaps the world should not be overly eager to see the withdrawal of foreign troops.

But France and Germany opposed the war against Saddam in 2003, while they endorsed the war against the Taliban two years earlier. They have repeatedly decried the notion that any power is justified in resorting to war without U.N. approval—except if there is NATO approval (that is, French and German approval), as in the war against Serbia in 1999 that led to the subsequent NATO occupation of Kosovo. Paris and Berlin were prepared to see Serb sovereignty ignored. They were prepared to see Saddam's powers limited. They were not prepared to accept U.S. intervention without their approval. The issue is not so much whether Iraq's sovereignty should be curtailed but whether it can be curtailed by an American force, outside of "international" control.

In effect, the underlying issue for Europeans is not the sovereignty of Iraq but the sovereignty of the United States. They worry that in a world without international controls, the most powerful state will predominate. No country will be sovereign so long as the United States remains sovereign. Rather than demand sovereignty for every territory, they urge international controls—especially for the United States.

It is, from a certain perspective, quite logical. Historically, the central purpose of European integration was to eliminate any danger from the revival of Germany. Neighboring states were prepared to diminish their own independence in order to establish controls on Germany. What the E.U. did for Germany and Europe, many Europeans hope the U.N.—or the International Criminal Court or

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some other scheme—can do for the United States and the wider world.

But we have no reason to think that a world authority can act with the necessary decisiveness or effectiveness to maintain security. The E.U. itself could not reach a common view on Iraq in 2003, with many members joining the U.S.-U.K. coalition even as France and Germany strenuously opposed the Anglo-American policy toward Saddam. Although other nations are prepared to sacrifice their sovereignty, moreover, the American people are not. Even Senator Kerry insists that "American security must never be ceded" to international authorities.

So the United States must remind the world that we are not Germany—a standing menace to others while we retain our independence. We also need to persuade others that they stand to lose by the extension of international controls more than they can hope to gain by constraining the United States. There is something seductive about international control. It holds out the hope that, after yielding their independence, nations can allow themselves to relax their own efforts and evade their own responsibilities. We need to remind others that a world on autopilot—a world in which no action is taken until everyone agrees—is not a safe world.

Sovereignty is a way to allow different states to go different ways. In that sense, it seems to answer the problem of differing priorities in different nations. But precisely because differences remain, we are also going to be arguing about what sovereignty means. The argument is likely to continue, whatever happens in the next few years in Iraq.

A good outcome, however, will certainly give more credit to American aims and motives. The prestige of American sovereignty—and perhaps of sovereignty as a general principle—is tied up, then, with the the current transition to genuine Iraqi sovereignty. So we must hope that last week's U.N. resolution is, whatever its incongruities, another step toward assuring a good outcome in Iraq. ♦

From Sudan to the East River

John Danforth's unsung service.

BY NINA SHEA

JOHN DANFORTH is back in the public eye. He was Nancy Reagan's longstanding choice to preside at her husband's funeral, which was held on Friday, just a week after President Bush nominated Danforth to represent the United States at the United Nations. To understand why this former senator who retired from politics nearly ten years ago is suddenly in the spotlight, it is necessary to appreciate the magnitude of his achievement on a matter close to President Bush's heart, the resolution of the genocidal civil war in southern Sudan.

As U.S. special envoy to Sudan, Danforth was the instrumental figure in achieving a set of substantive agreements signed by the warring parties on May 26. These protocols clear the way for a final peace accord ending the 21-year conflict, which has pitted the Islamist government in Khartoum against non-Muslims in the south and the central Nuba mountains. (This is not to be confused with the long-simmering conflict in the western Sudanese state of Darfur, which erupted in war earlier this year.) Twice as costly in lives as the Rwandan genocide, the north-south war in Sudan has been a concern of Bush's since he took office.

Soon after his inauguration, Bush took steps to ensure that U.S. aid—routinely blocked by Khartoum—reached the needy. And he became the first president to emphasize the Sudanese conflict in a public speech. In a departure from previous policy—a Clinton administration white paper had called Sudan a "back-burner" issue—Bush laid the blame for the bloodshed squarely on the National Islamic Front regime, whose crimes he likened to the Holocaust.

This was no exaggeration: Two million have died and 5 million more have been displaced. Virtually all of the victims have been southerners or Nubas. Since seizing power in a 1989 military coup, President Omar Bashir has sought to impose an extreme version of Islamic law, or *sharia*, on all of Sudan, instituting punishments such as stoning for adultery, amputation for theft, and crucifixion for blasphemy. The regime early made common cause with Osama bin Laden, whom it harbored into the mid-1990s while he was building up al Qaeda. To wage *jihad* against the rebellious animists and Christians, Bashir's government resorted to bombing, ground invasions, and the capture of over 10,000 slaves. By barring international relief, it caused mass starvation and disease.

The violence was far from spent when Bush came to Washington. After oil production began in 1999, Khartoum purchased MiGs and other sophisticated weaponry. In September 2001 alone, over 200 bombing attacks by Khartoum—on targets including churches, schools, clinics, markets, and people lined up at relief distribution sites—were reported.

Early that month, President Bush (overruling his own secretary of state, who had planned to phase out irregular diplomatic posts) launched Danforth's mission as special envoy in a Rose Garden ceremony. It was a landmark moment for the religious and human rights leaders in attendance,

Nina Shea is director of Freedom House's Center for Religious Freedom.

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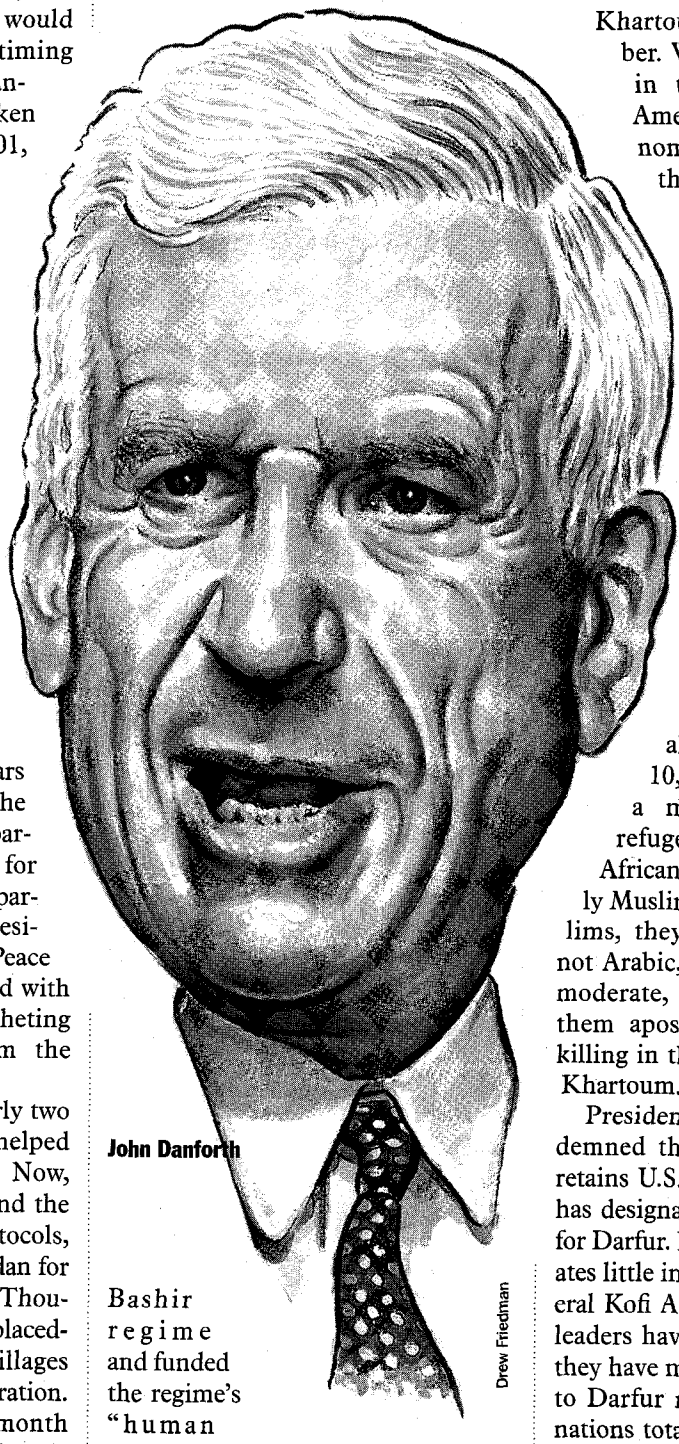
whose Sudan coalition had gotten nowhere with the Clinton administration. Five days later, al Qaeda struck New York.

Danforth went ahead with a scheduled visit to Sudan. Saying he was from the "show me" state of Missouri, he insisted on specific actions, not words. Few expected much would come of the effort. But the timing proved providential, and Danforth's steady, plainspoken approach paid off. In late 2001, Khartoum began allowing food aid into the Nuba Mountains for the first time in a decade, as well as to famished areas in the south. The following months saw an end to the slave raids and a cease-fire, all of which Danforth had demanded.

In July 2002, Khartoum and the main southern rebel group, the SPLA, met in Kenya under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a grouping of Sudan's neighbors and interested nations including the United States. Similar meetings over the previous seven years had been fruitless. This time, the deadlock was broken, and the parties agreed to a framework for peace. Talks then began on the particulars. In October 2002, President Bush signed the Sudan Peace Act, which Congress had passed with strong bipartisan support, ratcheting up pressure for results from the negotiations.

The talks continued for nearly two years. Repeatedly, Danforth helped keep the parties at the table. Now, with the success of the talks and the signing of the substantive protocols, peace has come to southern Sudan for the first time in a generation. Thousands are streaming out of displaced-person camps back to their villages and slaughtering bulls in celebration. The documents signed last month stipulate the limits of *sharia* and settle other thorny issues. The devil may lurk in the implementation, but observers are optimistic that a final peace will be signed within a month or two.

In all this, the United States has stood virtually alone. Europe allowed its oil companies to partner with the Bashir regime and funded the regime's "human rights" commissions—as if the slave raids and forcible mass starvation were problems of underdevelopment. The Chinese and Malay governments directly invested in Khartoum's oil partnership.



John Danforth

Drew Friedman

Africa as a whole was indifferent to the suffering, and voted to have Khartoum represent it on the U.N. Security Council and Human Rights Commission. The Arab League treated Khartoum as an esteemed member. What made the difference in the end were unilateral American diplomatic and economic "sticks," the credible threat of military pressure, bipartisan action by Congress, and the resolute leadership of President Bush—of which the appointment of Danforth was a pivotal part.

Ending the atrocities of a sitting government through peaceful negotiation, of course, fails to produce regime change. Khartoum thus is at liberty to continue its ethnic cleansing in Darfur, where it has already killed at least 10,000 people and displaced a million, often to harsh refugee camps. The besieged African tribes in Darfur are largely Muslim; but like the Nuba Muslims, they speak tribal languages, not Arabic, and their Islam is of the moderate, Sufi variety—making them apostates and fair game for killing in the eyes of the Islamists in Khartoum.

President Bush has publicly condemned the assault on Darfur. He retains U.S. economic sanctions, and has designated $288 million in relief for Darfur. Elsewhere the issue generates little interest. U.N. secretary general Kofi Annan and some European leaders have expressed concern, but they have mostly failed to act; the aid to Darfur mustered by the 25 E.U. nations totals $12 million. Given the Bush administration's record on Sudan so far, John Danforth's arrival at Turtle Bay may bring a new day. ♦

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Beleaguered Uighurs

Oppressed minority, terrorist recruits, or both?

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

IN EARLY JUNE, partisans of democracy in China commemorated the 15th anniversary of the Tiananmen massacre of June 3-4, 1989—one of the events of a remarkable year that dramatized the accuracy of Ronald Reagan's description of communism as evil. In retrospect, the killing of students and workers protesting peacefully in Beijing's famous square can be seen as a kind of forewarning that the fall of the Soviet empire would not bring the final end of communism.

One observance of the Tiananmen anniversary, in Washington over Memorial Day, brought new lessons about China. This was the fourth national convention of the Uighur American Association (UAA).

The Uighurs (pronounced "Weeghers") are a Turkic people in the region of northwestern China that Beijing calls Xinjiang and the Uighurs call Eastern Turkestan. They are linked to Tiananmen in the person of Wu'er Kaixi, a prominent figure in the 1989 democracy movement, and a Uighur, who spoke at the recent convention.

The Uighurs, who number at least 9 million, are overwhelmingly Muslims, of the spiritual, Sufi variety. The primary message the conference spokesmen sought to convey to Americans is simple. As Wu'er Kaixi put it, "Beijing will never accept political or ethnic pluralism, without significant pressure from other countries. Nationalism is the basis of the Communist party's continued domination of China." As evidence, he cited Beijing's unsympathetic attitude toward Taiwan, Hong Kong, Tibet, and other properties it considers rightfully its own, as well as the Communist authorities' intention, noted in official Chinese media and Western news reports in May, to impose unification by 2008.

There are only a thousand or so Uighurs in America, but we are likely to hear more of them as their aggrieved community inside China resists the intensifying nationalism sponsored by Beijing.

"We are in the same position as the Tibetans," says Erkin Alptekin—president of the World Uighur Congress in Munich, a former Uighur-language broadcaster for Radio Liberty, and a leading figure at the UAA convention. "The Chinese want to replace us with their own people as colonists, and assimilate those of us who remain, wiping out our culture." Alim Seytoff, UAA president, points out that Uighur-language education is now limited, and university courses must be taught in Chinese. There are no independent media in the Uighur tongue, and U.S.-funded Radio Liberty, Alptekin's former employer, discontinued its Uighur-language service in 1979 as a favor to the Chinese.

At the same time, the Uighurs have a curious bit part in the saga of Islamic extremism.

First, there are reportedly 22 Uighurs among those interned at Guantanamo Bay. According to Alptekin, there are several reasons for this. Some Uighurs were trained by the Chinese, in tandem with the Pakistanis, to fight the Russians in Afghanistan.

Chinese repression drove other Uighurs to flee into Afghanistan (which has a short border with China); these people were natural targets for al Qaeda and Taliban recruitment. Still others were Uighur children sent by their parents to Pakistan to escape Communist indoctrination—only to be trained in *jihad* and shipped off to fight in Kashmir, then to defend the Taliban.

A Uighur organization, the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), was declared a terrorist group by the State Department in 2002 at the insistence of the Chinese, who alleged it had ties to al Qaeda. However, information about the ETIM is hard to come by, and before September 11, 2001, according to Alptekin, the Chinese party secretary of Xinjiang, Wang Lequan, denied there was terrorism in his bailiwick. The global war on terror has been "hijacked by Beijing," according to Alptekin, as an excuse to brand all Uighurs as Islamist radicals.

Alptekin insists, however, that he and his World Uighur Congress have made nonviolence a basic principle of their activities. Armed resistance to the Chinese would only lead to more victimization, he told me. Few Uighurs seek their own state, Islamic or otherwise. According to Wu'er Kaixi, "we don't ask for independence, but for respect, and an end to forced assimilation."

Chinese respect for minority rights will doubtless be a long time coming, and in the meantime foreigners can exploit local grievances for their own benefit. Central Asian experts have long warned that the vast tracts where the Uighurs and other Chinese Muslims live have been infiltrated by Saudi/Wahhabi agents. Before September 11, according to the Uzbek authorities, these agitators dreamed of seizing the oil-rich and nuclear-technology-littered states of former Soviet Central Asia, including Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, as well as Uzbekistan, and joining them to Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. Grabbing a slice of Eastern Turkestan from the Chinese was considered a major side goal.

Stephen Schwartz is the author of The Two Faces of Islam: Saudi Fundamentalism and Its Role in Terrorism, *a Doubleday paperback.*

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China probably has more Muslims living outside a Muslim-ruled state than any other country. In addition to the Uighurs, the vast country has a Chinese-speaking Muslim community of up to 20 million called the Hui, also living in the northwest. The Hui have been the object of extensive evangelism, going back a century, by Wahhabis from Arabia, assisted by Hui returning from the pilgrimage to Mecca. As presented by Professor Dru C. Gladney of the University of Hawaii at Moana, a leading Western expert on Chinese Islam, Wahhabism in Chinese dress enjoys the backing of the Communist authorities. In a 1999 paper entitled "The Salafiyya Movement in Northwest China: Islamic Fundamentalism among the Muslim Chinese?" Gladney averred that Beijing has supported an explicit Wahhabi trend in Chinese Islam, through a movement called the Yihewani. This group takes its name from the extremist *Ikhwan*, or brotherhoods that helped found the Saudi state in the 1920s and then emerged, in somewhat different form, as the radical Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

According to Gladney, Chinese Wahhabism has millions of devotees, who show all the characteristics of the creed's Saudi inventors, beginning with hatred of Sufism. With the founding of the People's Republic of China, the state quickly suppressed all Sufi orders, and endorsed the Chinese Wahhabis, financing an official "China Islamic Association" under their influence (much like the puppet "Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association" and similar phony Christian bodies). Beijing renewed state patronage of the Yihewani after Mao's so-called Cultural Revolution, which featured wide-scale depredations against all religious groups.

So while ethnic suppression has driven some Uighurs toward al Qaeda, official Chinese Islam promotes the Wahhabi ideology from which al Qaeda sprang. Either way, ordinary Chinese Muslims, whose total numbers are unknown, are being shoved in the wrong direction.

The lesson here was well articulated by Erkin Alptekin: "The United States should raise the problem of the Uighurs to the same level as that of the Tibetans, and pressure China to open dialogue with all its minorities," even if the Chinese government resents it. The alternative: more, rather than fewer, recruits for Islamist terrorism, drawn from the turbulence of China. ♦

Diplomatic Missionaries

The dual role of the Saudi embassy.

BY STEVEN STALINSKY

IT'S BEEN A ROUGH FEW MONTHS for the Saudi embassy in Washington. First there were the money embarrassments. On April 4, the *Washington Post* noted: "A federal probe has turned up $36 million in unreported withdrawals [from Riggs Bank] by Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Washington and his wife, including million-dollar cash withdrawals reportedly made by the embassy chauffeur." Revelations eventually forced Riggs to acknowledge years of inadequate monitoring of suspicious financial transactions by the Saudis and others, and in late May the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency hit the bank with a record $25 million fine. Strapped for cash, the Saudi embassy was unable to pay the 2,600 people on its U.S. payroll that month, according to reports in several English-language Saudi newspapers.

Less attention-grabbing but also no doubt unwelcome to the Saudis are some quiet developments on Capitol Hill. The Saudi Arabia Accountability Act—a bill introduced last November that would impose sanctions on the kingdom unless the president certifies that Riyadh is making maximum efforts to fight terrorism—continues to garner sponsors. And on May 13, two members of Congress—Senator Susan Collins and Representative Dan Burton—announced that the General Accounting Office would investigate "Saudi support for an ideology promoting violence and intolerance globally."

Coming on top of the expulsion of dozens of Saudi diplomats late last year, the GAO investigation probably means new headaches for the beleaguered Islamic Affairs Department (IAD) of the Saudi embassy. This office has two functions, one familiar, the other unusual for a foreign embassy. It provides public information on Islam—that is, on the strict Saudi variant of Islam. And it supports the Saudi effort to evangelize the United States. Lately the IAD has been getting into trouble.

As well it might. For the past 20 years, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been engaged in a sustained push "to spread Islam to every corner of the earth," in the words of the Saudi royal family's website (*www.ain-al-yaqeen. com*). This missionary enterprise is known as *dawa*. To aid *dawa* in the United States, the Islamic Affairs Department of the embassy undertakes activities that range from sending Americans copies of the Koran to importing Saudi clerics to conduct seminars or serve in mosques in North America.

One thing that has attracted the interest of politicians and journalists is the IAD's website (*www.iad.org*). It

*Steven Stalinsky is executive director of the Middle East Media Research Institute (*www.memri.org*).*

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preaches *jihad* and martyrdom, explains the necessity for discrimination against Christians and Jews in Muslim societies, and sometimes belittles American culture. Here are some current gleanings from the website:

> • The Muslims are required to raise the banner of *Jihad* in order to make the Word of Allah supreme in this world. . . . If Muslims do not take up the sword, the evil tyrants of this earth will be able to continue oppressing the weak.
>
> • *Dhimmis* [non-Muslims living in Muslim lands] must be discriminated from Muslims in their attire. They are not allowed to display any abominable deed or gesture that could go in conflict with Islam such as the cross or bell. Observation of the above mentioned rules promotes amity among Muslims and removes all traces of enmity and hatred.
>
> • Today's false idols, which dominate over the entire world, are democracy, capitalism, socialism, and communism. Islam instead calls for Khilafa (Caliphate) . . .
>
> • In the American society many times when relations between husband and wife are strained, the husband simply deserts his wife. Then he cohabits with a prostitute or other immoral woman without marriage. . . . The [American] male is very polygamous, getting away with not taking responsibility for the families for which he should be responsible.

In late 2003, the expulsion from the United States of IAD official Jafar Idris, a leading cleric and lecturer on Islam who had worked in America for decades, triggered a flurry of bad publicity for the Saudis. In response, there ensued a classic instance of obfuscation, with Saudi spokesmen saying one thing in English for American consumption, and the opposite back home.

Thus, a Saudi embassy official told the *Washington Post* on December 7, "We are going to shut down the Islamic affairs section in every embassy." Two days later, however, the official news site of the government of Saudi Arabia reported that Minister of Islamic Affairs Saleh bin Abdul-Aziz bin Muhammad al-Sheikh had denied reports that the kingdom would close the Islamic Affairs Departments "following revelations that they espouse extremism." And in an interview in Arabic with the Saudi daily *al-Riyadh* on December 10, when asked whether the IADs would be closed, Al-Sheikh explained, "This information was published in an article in the *Washington Post* and it is not true. [The religious centers] still operate, and it is a part of the kingdom's message." On December 12, after Senator Charles Schumer pressed for investigation of the IAD, a spokesman for the Saudi embassy told the *New York Post* that he could not explain the discrepancy as to whether or not the IAD would be closed. It has remained open.

As for Jafar Idris, in a revealing interview in the Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* of January 30, 2004, he explained why he had been asked to leave—"The State Department claimed that I was involved in activities unbefitting my diplomatic position"—and expressed regret at being forced to withdraw from the United States, which he deems "one of the most fertile countries for Islamic missionary activities." Idris continued, "It could be that the Americans are predisposed [to accepting Islam]. . . . I always remind our brothers the missionaries not to confuse the official policies with the positions of the people: Americans, British, Japanese, or any others. Our missionary messages to the people are directed to elements that exist in every nation, and without these positive elements none of them would have converted to Islam."

Fittingly, Idris thanked his superior, the Saudi ambassador in Washington, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, for his praise and support. He remains firmly committed to *dawa*. Neither in the interview nor in the writings on his website (*www.jaafaridris.com*) does Idris betray any understanding that religious evangelism—quite apart from the association of Saudi Wahhabi Islam with extremism—is outside the American definition of a diplomat's work.

Nor do the Saudis accept this. They reacted to last year's expulsions of Idris and other government employees involved in *dawa* work by threatening to expel American diplomats in retaliation. Ambassador Ahmad bin Abdulaziz Kattan, the deputy chief of the Saudi diplomatic mission in the United States, warned in an interview with the Saudi Press Agency, "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has the right to implement the principle of reciprocity."

But the Saudis may not want to push this line of reasoning. Reciprocity isn't something they really have any interest in considering. They are not about to permit Christian missionaries to rent halls and deliver sermons and otherwise proselytize freely in Saudi Arabia—much less build churches and open Christian schools with U.S. government support. The thought is ludicrous, and not only because the U.S. government does not fund churches and religious schools: The Saudis themselves do not allow non-Muslim houses of worship within their borders at all.

The Saudi view was memorably stated by Prince Sultan, defense minister and a brother of King Fahd, in remarks at a press conference reported by the Associated Press on March 12, 2003. The advocates of building churches in Saudi Arabia, Sultan said, "are church people and they are, unfortunately, fanatics. . . . We are not against religions at all . . . but there are no churches—not in the past, the present, or future, and I am saying this and I am responsible for what I say. Whoever said this must shut up and be ashamed."

Reciprocity is foreign to this mindset. Once the GAO completes its report, it seems likely that the case for unilateral action by the United States to shut down the Islamic Affairs Department will only be stronger. ♦

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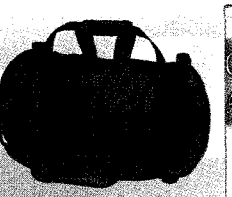

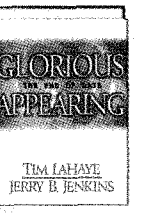
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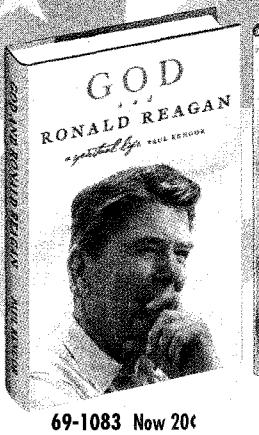
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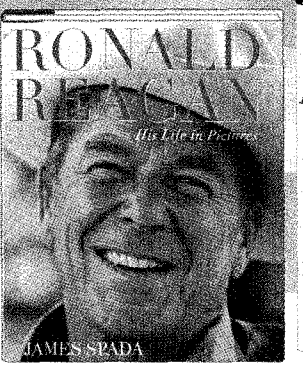
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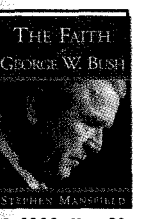
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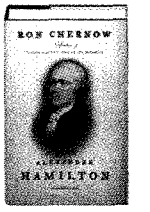
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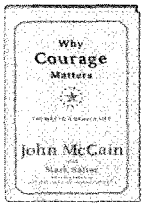
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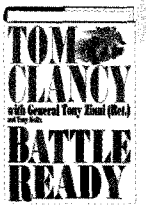
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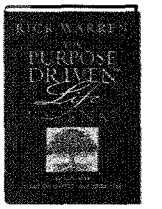
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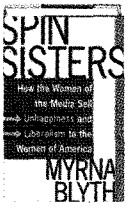
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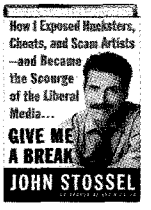
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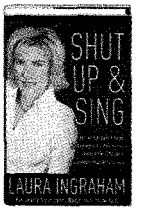
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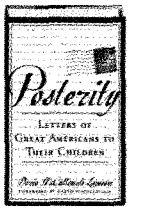
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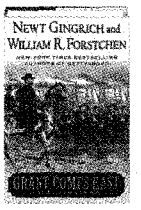
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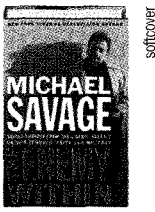
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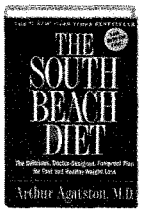
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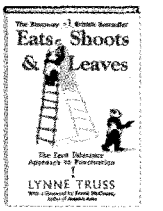
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What Ronald Reagan Understood

He saw the world as it was, and faced down the totalitarians and the appeasers

By David Gelernter

Following the long-ago apocalypse of World War I, the world seemed like a shellshocked battle-casualty remolded by surgeons into something new and terrible. For generations afterward, into the Second World War and out the other side, most people were afraid to look; nearly everyone was scared to act. Ronald Reagan was one of the few who looked straight at this pitiful wreck, grasped the big picture, and refused to accept it. He was no genius like Churchill, no all-conquering statesman-politico like Roosevelt, but his depth of vision and sheer courage were comparable to theirs, and he belongs with Roosevelt and Churchill among the world-changers. He was even attacked in the same ways they were: He was supposedly a charming lightweight bubble-brain like FDR *and* a fanatic warmongering ideologue like Churchill. Today we have another president who aspires to look the world in the eye and change it, and all we can say is God help him and may he prove to be as big a man as Ronald Reagan.

Since 1918, the state of the world has been so fundamentally simple, many people can't grasp it. It has survived in this condition during the German era of 1918-1945, the Soviet or Cold War era of '45 through '89, and the Radical Arab and Islamist era that followed and is still going strong. It is a three-party world consisting (not only but mainly) of pacifist-appeasers, terrorist-totalitarians, and a third group I will call "mystic nationalists." Throughout these years, the United States has been beset on two sides. We picture Reagan standing up to the Soviets; we sometimes forget that he was engaged on *two* fronts. He stood up to the pacifists also. And meanwhile the world needed him not only as a fighter but as a celebrant, a high priest. His greatness as a world leader lies in his three-part achievement: staring down the Soviets *and* the pacifists, *and* leading the Freedom and Democracy choir in his incomparably polished, inspiring way. (At a time when prominent American pacifists of the '80s are generously praising the man, at least sort of, it is ungenerous to point out that they were among his biggest headaches. Ungenerous but true.) Such statesmen as Harry Truman and Margaret Thatcher were brave fighters, but never approached Reagan as a lyrical celebrant of democracy, patriotism, and freedom. John F. Kennedy at his best was an equally lyrical high priest of Americanism, but never approached Reagan's stature as a freedom fighter.

Who are these three great groups whose existence Reagan sensed so sharply and clearly? After the First World War, Britain was (on the whole) appalled at what had happened, blamed herself (unreasonably) for imposing a harsh peace on beaten Germany and for not having prevented war in the first place. And so Britain gave the world modern pacifism. Pacifism is an ancient doctrine firmly rooted in the New Testament. But the modern variety has these characteristics: It is based on guilt ("we are just as bad as our enemies, maybe worse"), tied to defeatism, and propounds a concrete foreign policy of disarmament and appeasement.

In the 1980s, Reagan was confronted with these same elements—Western guilt, defeatism, and the drive to disarm and appease—as he struggled to rebuild America's moribund military, meet the Soviet nuclear challenge in Europe, and develop an antimissile system (the Strategic Defense Initiative, or SDI) that could prevent world war by protecting America instead of threatening to demolish Russia. When he traveled to Europe in 1982 he faced massive protests in France, Britain, Italy, and especially Germany. Historians and philosophers of history will be faced one day (when they wake up) with a puzzle. Compare Reagan's trip to Europe in '82 with JFK's two decades earlier. Both arrived bearing the same message: America will stand by Europe. America and Europe will face down the Soviet threat together. But Europe loved Kennedy to

David Gelernter is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard.

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pieces and did not love Reagan *at all*. Why? The answer must lie, at least partly, in a sign waved at Reagan by a European peace-marcher in 1982: "I am afraid." As Europe steadily disarmed and her enemies did not, she grew (not surprisingly) steadily less bold and more scared. '63, '82, '03; the deterioration is sad and clear.

Reagan faced down the pacifists and appeasers. And he faced down the totalitarians. Hitler was the biggest terrorist-totalitarian threat of the 1930s; radical Arabs are the biggest today. But in the '80s Reagan confronted the Soviets, who were the most dangerous of all to America and the world at large. The Nazis never had the means to destroy the United States, and Arab radicals don't today; the Soviets did. In *Reagan's War*, Peter Schweizer describes a fascinating incident during the all-out Soviet war games of the early 1980s. The Russians (just for the hell of it) blipped the orbiting *Challenger* space shuttle with a high-power laser. Only minor damage resulted, but the message was clear. We are feeling our oats, and we have you in our sights. We can hit where and when we please.

Terrorists and totalitarians have always been two sides of one coin; a totalitarian out of office is a terrorist. The Nazis were terrorists until they took over Germany; in fact they never stopped being terrorists. In the '80s, the Soviets supported Marxist and anarchist terrorists all over the world. In recent years, warm fraternal ties between Saddam Hussein and Arab terrorists, or the totalitarian Taliban and al Qaeda, follow the same pattern.

Reagan faced down the most dangerous totalitarians. With a mighty shove (or a kick in the pants), he sent the Soviets reeling towards the ash heap of history (Trotsky's phrase). But he was acutely aware at the same time that they were doomed anyway, in the long run. Many big-shot thinkers disagreed. They were positive that the Soviets were holding their own or were beating the West. Professor Seweryn Bialer of Columbia University, 1982:

> The Soviet Union is not now nor will it be during the next decade in the throes of a true system crisis, for it boasts enormous unused reserves of political and social stability that suffice to endure the deepest difficulties.

Professor John Kenneth Galbraith of Harvard, 1984:

> The Russian system succeeds because, in contrast to the Western industrial economies, it makes full use of its manpower.

Etc. The point is not to ridicule these mistaken profs; rather to underline that, while liberals today like to argue that "Reagan made no difference, the Soviet Union was on the way out anyway," they did not see it that way *at the time*—but Reagan did.

Nor did Reagan leave the Soviet collapse to chance. His arms buildup and especially his Strategic Defense Initiative were feats the Soviets could not duplicate even if they died trying. For Gorbachev, last ruler of the Soviet Empire, the launching of the SDI project "was the most effective single act to bring that old *apparatchik* to his senses," according to Professor Genrikh Trofimenko, adviser to the Soviet Foreign Ministry (quoted by Derek Leebaert in *The Fifty-Year Wound*). I have heard liberals argue that Reagan could not possibly have *planned* to beat Soviet communism this way, by unleashing the U.S. economy; but how do they think we won World War II? Of course by heroic fighting *and*—by unleashing the U.S. economy. U.S. economic might crushed the Nazis and Japanese as it crushed the Soviets.

Insufficiently appreciated: Reagan did not merely launch military projects with ambitious technological components; he *believed* in technology, and in Silicon Valley entrepreneurship. (After all, he was a good Californian.) He believed that technology would help unleash the American economy, which would charge off yelping and yapping into the future and leave the Soviets far behind. When Reagan left office, technology was a *Republican* issue. It is puzzling and sad that George W. Bush has made so little effort to regain the issue for Republicans.

Finally, Reagan furnished his own camp with inspiring leadership. In one of his favorite, best-remembered phrases, he told the world that America was and must always be the "shining city upon a hill." "The phrase comes from John Winthrop," he explained, "who wrote it to describe the America he imagined." Winthrop wrote those words aboard the *Arbella* bound for Massachusetts Bay in 1630: "We shall find that the God of Israel is among us," he wrote. "For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us." The phrase comes from Matthew 5:14 ("Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid"), and indirectly from the prophet Isaiah ("In the end of days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and many nations shall flow unto it"). Reagan's use of these words connected late-20th century America to the humane Christian vision, the *Puritan* vision, that created this nation.

To grasp Reagan's achievement, we must understand the striking continuum of pacifism from the 1930s through the 1980s through today—*and* remember, simultaneously, that Churchill had help chang-

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ing Britain's mind (namely Hitler's war); Bush had help changing America's mind and his own—9/11. But in 1980 the world was (approximately) at peace. The Soviet war in Afghanistan was the only large-scale exception. Reagan therefore confronted pacifist America and the pacifist world with no leverage, no mechanical advantage. To accomplish his objectives he had to shoulder the whole weight of world pacifism and throw it over. And he did.

Nowadays Swedish demonstrators wave signs reading "USA-murderers" and "War is terrorism." In 1982, Italian demonstrators brandished signs reading "Reagan brings war to Italy" and "Reagan executioner." During the First World War, the British economist John Maynard Keynes wrote, "I work for a government I despise for ends I think criminal"; in the mid-1930s, British prime minister Stanley Baldwin was reported to be "for peace at any price," and in 1938, the politician Thomas Jones (Baldwin's close friend) wrote that "we have to convince the world that for peace we are prepared to go to absurd lengths." Same theme from World War I through this afternoon: The United States (and Britain) are guilty; war is evil no matter what; peace must be preserved whatever the cost.

Reagan knew it all to be a simple-minded lie, and said so memorably at Pointe du Hoc. "The men of Normandy had faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead or on the next. It was the deep knowledge—and pray God we have not lost it—that there is a profound moral difference between the use of force for liberation and the use of force for conquest."

A Finnish anti-Iraq-war protester told an interviewer not long ago, "All my life I've been of the opinion that you can't achieve anything with violence and war except evil." In 1982, 59 members of the German Bundestag signed a petition attacking Reagan's "massive arms buildup with mass-destruction weapons such as the ones that your defense minister has enforced." (The defense minister was Caspar Weinberger; with his deceptively Jewish-sounding name, Weinberger was Europe's Wolfowitz during the 1980s.) In the 1920s "we converted ourselves to military impotence," said Sir Warren Fisher, Treasury permanent secretary, describing Britain's disarmament policy. Same theme from 1920 through today: Never mind the enemy, weapons are evil. Weapons *are* the enemy. Reagan said "to hell with that," and made it stick.

In 2003, a German pacifist planning a trip to Iraq announced, "I hope to ask Saddam Hussein to cooperate with the weapons inspectors and generally work for peace." In 1982, the German Social Democrat Herbert Wehner (who was on the payroll of the East German secret police) explained that the Soviet military was "defensive rather than aggressive." "Germany does not want war," wrote the prominent British statesman Lord Lothian in the *Times* after a cordial visit to Hitler, "and is prepared to renounce it absolutely as a method of settling her disputes with her neighbors."

Same theme from the 1930s till now—don't be an alarmist warmonger, the enemy's not so bad! A "human shield" who went to Iraq in 2003 to protect Iraqis from Americans wrote afterwards, "I was shocked when I first met a pro-war Iraqi in Baghdad—a taxi driver taking me back to my hotel late at night. I explained that I was American and said, as we shields always did, 'Bush bad, war bad, Iraq good.' He looked at me with an expression of incredulity." ("By the time I left Baghdad five weeks later," he reports, "my views had changed drastically.") MIT economist Lester Thurow, in the early 1980s: "It is a vulgar mistake to think that most people in Eastern Europe are miserable." In 1938 the British pundit and politician Sir Evelyn Wrench was shocked by the Kristallnacht pogrom, but "after a few days I regained my confidence in Germany's good intentions," and after all Hitler "will *not* go to war unless pushed into it by others," according to the former Labour party leader George Lansbury. Saddam was not so bad, Soviet rule was not so bad, Hitler was not so bad—and left-wing intellectuals call Bush and Reagan simple-minded!

"Simplistic"—France's foreign minister on George W. Bush's foreign policy, 2002. "Simplistic"—*New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis on Ronald Reagan, 1983.

At an anti-Iraq war demonstration in March 2004, the actor Woody Harrelson read a poem: "I recognize your face, I recognize your name. Your daddy killed for oil, and you did the same." During Reagan's presidency, America was still reeling from an antiwar movement that had accused American soldiers of grotesque, routine atrocities in Vietnam. In the late 1930s, the British essayist A.L. Rowse, dining at Oxford, "heard a member of the government urging the usual Ribbentrop arguments upon the assembly. In a pause Robert Byron leaned across the table and said loudly, 'Are you *paid* to make propaganda for your country's enemies?'"

Ronald Reagan, on the other hand, thought patriotism was good in itself. He thought America was beautiful.

Anyway *it's impossible, can't be done*: Bush opponents all over the world say so with respect to a free, democratic Iraq. Reagan's opponents said exactly the same about bringing down the Soviets: It's impossible, not to mention stupid. During the 1930s, all sorts of Hitler-appeasers pointed out that Hitler was for peace—and the West could never beat him anyhow.

Reagan said "I *can*; watch me."

We understand the totalitarian's lust for power. We are less familiar with the pacifist's lust for impotence. But if

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Bettmann / CORBIS

Promoting the Strategic Defense Initiative, April 8, 1987

we care to understand the modern world, the "Will to Powerlessness" is just as important as Nietzsche's famous *Wille zur Macht*.

To understand modern Conservatives versus modern Liberals, think of Reagan and the president he defeated and replaced, Jimmy Carter. Carter left office with a tight-lipped bitterness that the whole world understood: We *watched* him lose his Liberal virginity on international TV. The Soviets grabbed for Afghanistan, one more buffer state to shore up the fringes of empire—and Carter was shocked. The Communists were *not* good guys after all! Inflicting liberalism on the economy was not such a great idea either; Carter left office in 1981 to the grating clatter of economic disintegration. Twelve percent inflation and 21 percent interest rates had Americans well and truly scared. Hence the grim, drawn faces of a Carter, a Kerry, a Gore: They are faithful to the liberalism of their youth, but feel it crumbling beneath their feet. Today's proud leaders of liberalism are stone statues on the portals of medieval churches: rigid, immovable, and somberly decaying.

Reagan (on the other hand) was no *mere* optimist. He was an optimist who dealt in reality and looked at the world head on. He was a modern Conservative in the great tradition of Benjamin Disraeli, the "Tory Democrat." Conservatives and liberals (in this worldview) are equally progressive, equally interested in the future. They are different insofar as liberals are detached from the past and look to the international community for advice and approval. Conservatives are detached from the international community and look to the past for advice and approval: to their ancestors, their national history, their religious traditions, their cultural patrimony. "What inspired all the men of the armies that met here?" Reagan asked at Pointe du Hoc. "It was faith, and belief; it was loyalty and love."

Reagan was a realist, but a "mystic nationalist" also. He did in fact call himself a "mystic," according to Peter Schweizer; and he was certainly a patriot and a nationalist. But mystic nationalism is more than the sum of parts. It is a religion—but one that translucently overlays (without obscuring or superceding) Judaism or Christianity.

Mystic nationalism is a tradition nobly represented in the 20th century by such statesmen as Winston Churchill and David Ben-Gurion. Reagan would have recognized himself in a passage by the poet Rupert Brooke, killed at age 28 in the First World War. "He was immensely surprised," Brooke wrote in 1914 about an unnamed friend, "to perceive that the actual earth of England held for him . . . a quality which, if he'd ever been sentimental enough to use the word, he'd have called 'holiness.' His astonishment grew as the full flood of 'England' swept him on from thought to thought. He felt the triumphant helplessness of a lover."

"There are a few favorite windows I have up there that I like to stand and look out of early in the morning," Reagan said in his farewell speech, referring to the White House. "The view is over the grounds here to the Washington Monument, and then the Mall and the Jefferson Memorial. But on mornings when the humidity is low, you can see past the Jefferson to the river, the Potomac, and the Virginia shore. Someone said that's the view Lincoln had when he saw the smoke rising from the Battle of Bull Run. I see more prosaic things: the grass on the banks, the morning traffic as people make their way to work, now and then a sailboat on the river."

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Abraham Lincoln spoke for mystic nationalism. "The mystic chords of memory," Lincoln wrote, "stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearth-stone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature." That was Reagan's faith also.

One of the most persistent anti-Reagan accusations is that he failed in detail; he operated at the "executive summary" level. But in Reagan this was a strength. No personality can encompass everything. Most detail specialists approach life bottom-up and never do grasp the big picture. A rabbinic anecdote explains why Moses was a great leader: Moses proclaimed (Exodus 15:1) "I will sing to the Lord for He is greatly exalted," and the people responded, referring to the Egyptian army's convenient disappearance: "Horse and rider He has hurled into the sea." The people saw only *details*: Egypt's army had lost a battle. Moses saw the big picture—the greatness of God. Reagan was no Moses, but he too was a big picture man; and he did usher a significant portion of mankind from bondage into freedom. ♦

It Wasn't Inevitable

Reagan's military and economic policies won the Cold War

By Irving Kristol

Ronald Reagan was the most popular American president since FDR. He was also the most hated president since FDR. The reason he was hated was that his policies were often trans-partisan in bewildering ways. The reason he was popular was that his policies worked. This fact is still a puzzle to most American intellectuals, academics, and journalists, who are more comfortable talking about the personal sources of his popularity than about his policies.

It is generally conceded—even by Senator Kennedy!—that Reagan's Cold War militancy helped bring about the collapse of Communist Russia. But that's a deceptive statement. He didn't help bring it about. He brought it about. It is tempting to see the Soviet collapse, in retrospect, as inevitable for internal reasons, while allowing that Reagan's policies hastened a predictable end. But that end was not predictable. Throughout Reagan's eight years in office, the Soviet Union remained a major military power—a major *nuclear* military power. The governments of Western Europe were sufficiently impressed by this power to consider occasional appeasement as a suitable option. And the people of Western Europe were subject to intermittent panic at the possibility of nuclear war on their territory.

No one but Ronald Reagan thought that the goal of American foreign policy should be *victory* in the Cold War. How naive, how simple-minded that idea seemed! But though Reagan was indeed unsophisticated by State Department (and European) standards, he did understand the American people as diplomats and foreigners did not. He knew that the people would support a war only if victory was the goal of their leaders. Europeans, and highly educated Americans, are habituated to think of "the people" as counters in a complex and competitive game of war and peace. Americans, by tradition and temperament, are unused to such games. They want to know who the enemy is and what we are doing to crush him.

Ronald Reagan rallied the American people to fight the Cold War by holding out the prospect of victory. Without his leadership, it is not so clear that the Soviet Union would have collapsed "on its own," as in retrospect it seemed to do. The Cold War need not have ended when it did, or as it did. It was Ronald Reagan, by his arms buildup and his inability to contemplate anything but an American victory, that persuaded the Soviet leaders they were fighting a losing war. And so they folded their tents and stole away.

But none of this could have happened if the American economy had not been getting stronger while the Soviet economy was getting weaker. That the latter was the case was attested to at the time by the stories told by Russian

Irving Kristol is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and author of Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea.

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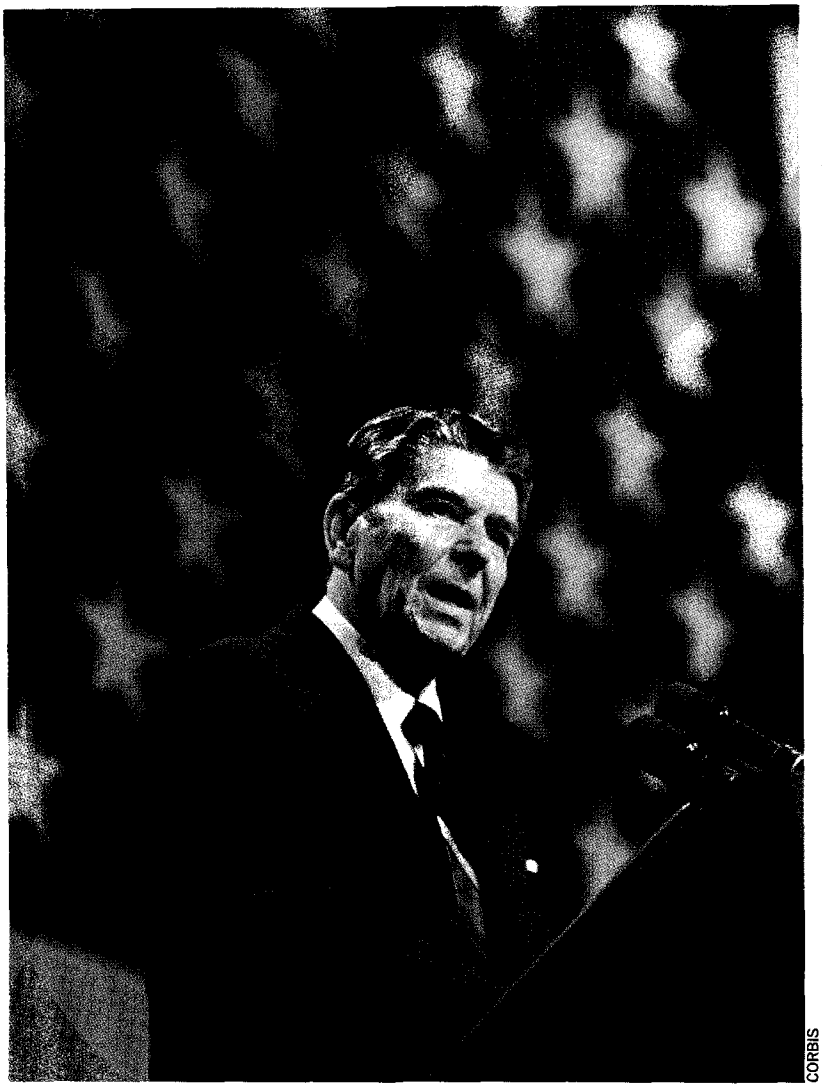

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and East European émigrés—horror stories about an economy that was in shambles. But these émigrés did not have Ph.D.s in economics, and their reports were discounted by most Western economists, who were convinced by Soviet statistics that the economy of the USSR was in the process of overtaking ours. They were the only statistics available, and macroeconomists, used to juggling national income and national product numbers, would rather starve on poor statistics than feast on personal anecdotes.

The same economists had a dire view of the American economy, in spite of the fact that during Reagan's eight years, this economy had a splendid rate of growth. The trouble was that that growth was impelled by an economic theory that was unacceptable to them—what was called, somewhat lamely, "supply-side economics." Whenever supply-siders started to talk publicly about the economics of growth, the economics profession would loudly demand, "Your numbers! Where are your numbers? How much growth and how much deficit?" Supply-siders couldn't provide those numbers because they didn't have them. Conventional economists, by contrast, had the numbers that were the glory of their profession, and its Achilles' heel. (An economist is recently reported to have said: "We give our numbers in decimal points to demonstrate that we too have a sense of humor.")

What supply-side economics—known journalistically as "Reaganomics"—did was to elevate microeconomics over macroeconomics. Microeconomics deals with people and the way they invest their labor and their capital in the market. Macroeconomics deals with the relationships among those majestic but ghostly figures—gross national product, productivity, etc.—which are the lifeblood of the Council of Economic Advisers. The priesthood of distinguished economists objected that a cut in tax rates could be justified only if it was accompanied by a simultaneous cut in expenditures. Supply-siders replied that that strategy would condemn them to wait forever, because in a democracy the political class makes political gains only by spending money for its constituents, not by cutting programs that benefit them. Slowly conservative economists saw the wisdom of the supply-side strategy: A tax policy that energizes the economy, government regulations that are not too destructive, and moderate restraints on spending would have the effect of shrinking the bloated welfare state relative to the size of the economy. The welfare state itself could not be wished away.

By now Reaganomics has become the semiofficial philosophy of the Republican party. As a consequence, this party is now seen as having a plausible and legitimate claim to be the governing party—to the consternation of the Democratic party, whose royal rights to the kingdom are no longer unquestioned.

In sum, Ronald Reagan made the Republican party proactive in economic policy as in foreign policy, while forcing the Democratic party to be reactive in both. This is more proactivity than is tolerable to some traditional Republicans, who tend to whine that our troops are too far from home, or that government expenditures have not been radically cut. So the Reagan legacy is still not entirely secure. But that there is such a legacy, and that it is of historic dimensions, is certain. ♦

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The View from the Gulag

Natan Sharansky describes the "brilliant moment" when news of the Evil Empire speech reached Siberia

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Natan Sharansky was born in Ukraine in 1948 and studied mathematics in Moscow. He worked as an English interpreter for the great Soviet physicist and dissident Andrei Sakharov, and himself became a champion of Soviet Jewry and a worker for human rights. Convicted in 1978 on trumped-up charges of treason and spying for the United States, Sharansky was sentenced to 13 years in prison. After years in the Siberian gulag, he was released in a U.S.-Soviet prisoner exchange in 1986 and moved to Israel, where he founded a political party promoting the acculturation of Soviet immigrants. He is now a minister without portfolio in the government of Ariel Sharon. Tom Rose, a frequent contributor to* THE WEEKLY STANDARD, *interviewed Sharansky in Jerusalem.*

Do you remember the first time you heard the name Ronald Reagan?

I was already a longtime prisoner when Ronald Reagan was elected. I didn't know much about him, and I can't say I remember having heard much about him. None of us in the Gulag knew much, and I actually knew less than most because I spent so much time in private punishment cells, where for months at a time you were totally isolated. Our first indication that Ronald Reagan might well be the key figure in our struggle, the struggle of all people fighting against tyranny, came from the ferocious denunciations of him that appeared more frequently in the official Soviet press. Now, all Soviets were experts in the art of "reading between the lines," and of course us dissidents, we were the professors of this high art form. In fact, we were so good at reading between the lines, we almost could piece together events as they really happened by what the authorities were not telling us. What they did not tell us was as important as what they did tell us, if not even more important.

We had very mixed feelings at first. Remember, we accepted it as a given that Jimmy Carter was the world's great human rights advocate. Only later, after we saw what words without action can mean, did it occur to us that words were all he could offer. But to his credit, it was Jimmy Carter who insisted on keeping the issue in the international spotlight. Remember, prior to him, no one seemed willing to offer even words. All we knew about Reagan was that he was a poorly regarded actor, and after living for so long in an Orwellian world where play-acting was all we ever experienced from our own leaders, the very fact that Reagan was an actor, I will say, left us far more concerned than encouraged at first.

Were there any particular Reagan moments that you can recall being sources of strength or encouragement to you and your colleagues?

I have to laugh. People who take freedom for granted, Ronald Reagan for granted, always ask such questions. Of course! It was the great brilliant moment when we learned that Ronald Reagan had proclaimed the Soviet Union an Evil Empire before the entire world. There was a long list of all the Western leaders who had lined up to condemn the evil Reagan for daring to call the great Soviet Union an evil empire right next to the front-page story about this dangerous, terrible man who wanted to take the world back to the dark days of the Cold War. This was the moment. It was the brightest, most glorious day. Finally a spade had been called a spade. Finally, Orwell's Newspeak was dead. President Reagan had from that moment made it impossible for anyone in the West to continue closing their eyes to the real nature of the Soviet Union.

It was one of the most important, freedom-affirming declarations, and we all instantly knew it. For us, that was the moment that really marked the end for them, and the beginning for us. The lie had been exposed and could never, ever be untold now. This was the end of Lenin's "Great October Bolshevik Revolution" and the beginning of a new revolution, a freedom revolution—Reagan's Revolution.

We were all in and out of punishment cells so often—

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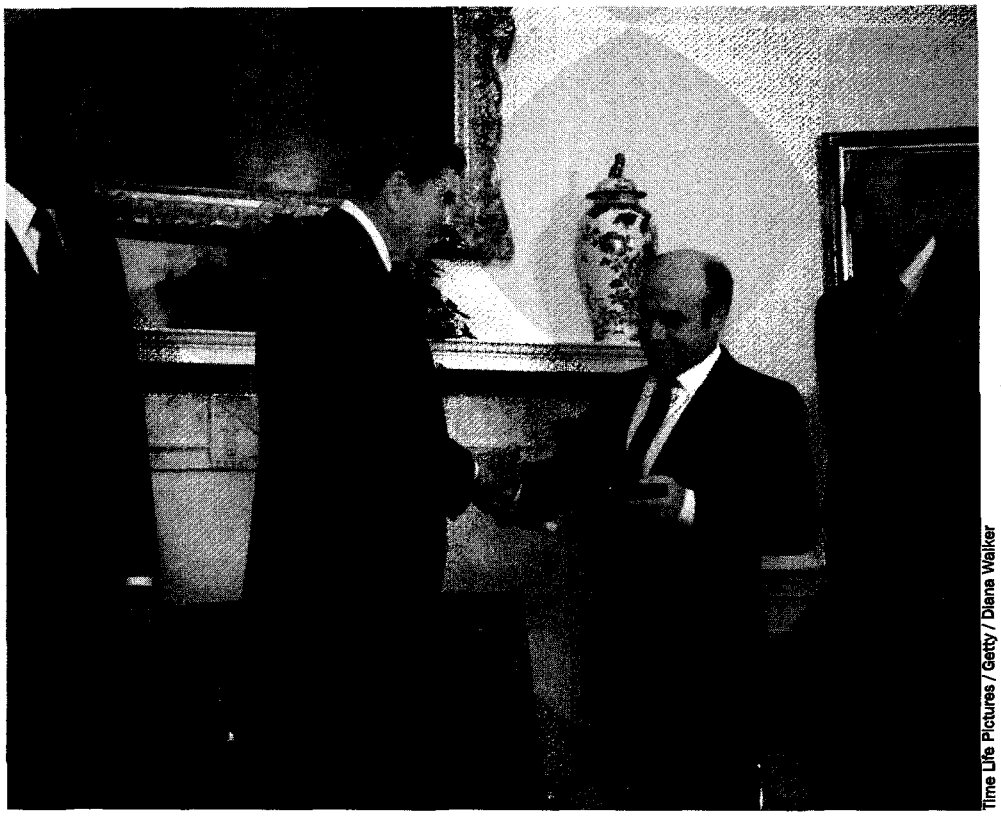
me more than most—that we developed our own tapping language to communicate with each other between the walls. A secret code. We had to develop new communication methods to pass on this great, impossible news. We even used the toilets to tap on.



Time Life Pictures / Getty / Diana Walker

Sharansky meets Reagan, January 11, 1989

In your memoir, *Fear No Evil*, you write that President Reagan was captivated by this story.

The first time I met President Reagan I told him this story. I felt free to tell him everything. I told him of the brilliant day when we learned about his Evil Empire speech from an article in *Pravda* or *Izvestia* that found its way into the prison. When I said that our whole block burst out into a kind of loud celebration and that the world was about to change, well, then the president, this great tall man, just lit up like a schoolboy. His face lit up and beamed. He jumped out of his seat like a shot and started waving his arms wildly and calling for everyone to come in to hear "this man's" story. It was really only then that I started to appreciate that it wasn't just in the Soviet Union that President Reagan must have suffered terrible abuse for this great speech, but that he must have been hurt at home too. It seemed as though our moment of joy was the moment of his own vindication. That the great punishment he had endured for this speech was worth it.

Can it really be said that Ronald Reagan was actually responsible for an event as great as the collapse of the Soviet Union?

Yes.

One man in one office?

Yes. Absolutely. But not one man alone. If I would be permitted to widen the credit a little more, I would say the collapse of the Soviet Union is attributable to three men. Andrei Sakharov, Scoop Jackson, and Ronald Reagan. These were the people who brought moral clarity to the conflict and started the chain of events which led to the end of Soviet communism. Sakharov to the Russian people, Senator Jackson to the American government, and Ronald Reagan on behalf of the American people to the world and thus back to the Soviet Union. They created the policy of linkage: That international relations and human rights must be linked. That how a government treats its own people cannot be separated from how that government could be expected to treat other countries. That how governments honor commitments they make at home will show the world how they will honor their commitments abroad.

His constant, unalloyed trumpeting of freedom's call, his uncompromising opposition to tyranny and bold optimism—where do you think this came from?

I don't think Hollywood. It came from him. From inside Ronald Reagan. He had two things all of us need but few of us seem to have. Ronald Reagan had both moral clarity and courage. He had the moral clarity to understand the truth, and the courage both to speak the truth and to do what needed to be done to support it. There was more to Reagan than rhetoric. His biggest single contribution was that he stopped allowing the Soviet Union to use the United States to strengthen itself at America's expense. The Soviet Union had learned—been taught, actually—that the United States and Europe were there to provide the very source of energy and support the Soviet system needed to survive. Ronald Reagan instinctively

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Reagan with Gorbachev in Moscow, May 1988

understood this when no one else did. This is the most important paradox of all. Freedom's greatest threat was in many ways the product of this freedom. Soviet tyranny was completely dependent upon the West for its very survival. Reagan knew this. The Soviet Union, a nation of 200 million slaves, could not possibly keep pace with the technological, economic, or scientific developments taking place in the West. The moment Reagan took that support away from the Soviet Union, it started to fall apart.

How is it that truths about freedom and totalitarianism which appear today so evident and obvious can be completely missed for so long and by so many people?

Appeasement is not the exception for democracies. It is the rule for democracies. Appeasement is a powerful side effect of democracy. The West's appeasement policy toward the Soviet Union began almost the moment its appeasement policy toward Nazi Germany ended. It didn't end until Ronald Reagan. Democratic leaders need peace to survive. Because democracies have to reflect the will of their people, democratic leaders choose appeasement because anything is preferable to war. Free peoples go to war only when they have no other choice. By the way, this is democracy's great strength as well as its great weakness. Democracies are both so free, so stable, and so prosperous because their people don't want war. Therefore, Western leaders were only continuing in this tradition by believing that the Soviet Union needed to be transformed from a deadly rival into a partner for cooperation. Even President Carter, who understood human rights better than any president before him, always chose to appease the Soviet Union rather than to force it to compete with the West.

Since we can't reproduce Ronald Reagan himself, what practical lessons from him can we apply today to achieve a similar effect?

Linkage. This is the most important thing Reagan did. He established the pattern and insisted upon compliance. It worked to bring down the greatest, most totalitarian empire in all history. It can surely work today against enemies no less dangerous but far less powerful. But linkage takes both courage and moral clarity. Reagan's great strength was his optimistic faith in freedom and that every human being deserved freedom and that this freedom is a force that can liberate and empower and enrich and ennoble.

It is hard to imagine two people more different in life experiences than Natan Sharansky and Ronald Reagan. Did you feel those differences on a human level?

We both saw the world similarly. That is what matters. Not the experiences themselves but what is learned from them. People used to say that Reagan's jokes exposed him as a simpleton. To me they revealed his strengths and convictions. He took great joy in telling me the old joke about the time Soviet president Leonid Brezhnev and his deputy Alexei Kosygin discussed what would happen to the USSR if it really did conform to the Helsinki Accords and adopted a truly open emigration policy. "You and I would be the only two citizens left in the USSR," Brezhnev said. "Speak for yourself," answered Kosygin. Ronald Reagan understood the power of this joke. He stood up to evil. He had the courage to fight evil and the wisdom to defeat it.

It seems Ronald Reagan did Alexei Kosygin one better. Today the Soviet Union has no citizens!

Indeed. Thanks to Ronald Reagan, to the legacy he leaves behind, we now know that totalitarianism can be beaten and that freedom can come to anyone who wants it. ♦

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Ronald Reagan and the American Century

Without him, there would not have been a happy ending

By Jeffrey Bell

The death of Ronald Reagan brings to a close the most surprising political life of the 20th century. A century that through 1979 was notable for world wars, ideological mass murder, and the relentless advance of statism had a happy final act no one but he expected. If he had not lived and succeeded, the 20th century would not have been, in the fullest sense, the American century it turned out to be.

Reagan was utterly American. He dreamed vast optimistic dreams, and lived to see some of the most unlikely ones come true. He was accused of living a Hollywood-shaped fantasy life, and in a way he did. But rather than inhabit a dream world of his own making, Reagan had an ability to mold reality until it resembled his dreams.

Reagan was utterly of his century. Born in 1911, he aspired to a personal heroism of the Jack Armstrong variety, fulfilled in the 1920s by his many rescues as a lifeguard. Captivated by the drama of major league baseball, he became a radio announcer and mastered the forgotten art of "re-creation"—transforming unadorned narrative from a ticker tape into a dramatic spectacle that existed mainly in his own head. Reagan fought his way from the sticks to the big city in the openly ambitious yet innocent way replicated in so many early 20th-century success stories.

As a successful Hollywood actor, he went through the midcentury flirtation with the left—not only, as some biographers imply, the anti-Communist left—characteristic of young idealists of that time and place. Politically active by his early 30s, he concluded from experience that the left was a false god, and a frighteningly real threat to American democracy.

Beginning in the 1940s, Reagan devoted much of his life to a political struggle against the left in general and Soviet-style communism in particular. He fought and plotted against the Communists everywhere he could—from the grubby, petty politics of the actors' union all the way to private councils with the first Polish pope and the climactic summits of the Cold War. Today, few on either side of that struggle would deny that this American dreamer proved to be communism's worst nightmare.

As president, Reagan won the Cold War with a host of specific moves, some of them well known and some of them only recently revealed, with the declassification of documents and the work of a small but growing group of appreciative scholars.

He made these moves believing, from the outset of his presidency, that they could help bring final victory. Of his close advisers, probably only two—the second of his six national security advisers, William Clark, and CIA director William Casey—shared so extravagant a hope. But isolation of this kind never stopped Reagan. It didn't even seem to bother him. He operated on faith, and openly announced his vision in London in 1982, consigning communism to the "ash heap of history" in a world where democratic ideas are destined to triumph.

Little more than nine years later, the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, which together had spanned northern Eurasia, no longer existed. For many, the completeness, even more the swiftness, of his prophecy's fulfillment is the biggest barrier to understanding the magnitude of Reagan's achievement. Most now concede Reagan gave communism a shove, but for a system to disappear so utterly, it must have been a hollow shell to begin with. No matter who was president, many believe, it would have been only a matter of time before the inevitable collapse took place.

Such dismissals of Reagan face an inconvenient fact: When he ran for president, few or none of these trends were in evidence. In 1980, socialism still stood as the big idea of 20th-century politics. Despite its manifest economic failures, it looked anything but terminal. In the wake of the worldwide social upheaval of the 1960s, it had gained new momentum.

Jeffrey Bell, an adviser to Ronald Reagan in his 1976 and 1980 campaigns, is a principal of Capital City Partners, a Washington consulting firm.

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The Soviet bloc was not retreating, but advancing at a faster pace than at any time since the late 1940s. During the 1970s, South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and Nicaragua all became pro-Soviet dictatorships.

In Western Europe, the major political event of the 1970s was the rise of Eurocommunism. In 1976, the Communist party received an unprecedented 34 percent of the vote in Italy, to 38 percent for the ruling Christian Democrats. In Portugal in 1975, a right-wing civilian dictatorship was ousted by leftist army officers who came within an eyelash of installing a Communist dictatorship on NATO's southwestern coast. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger at one point contemplated a cutoff of clandestine American aid to Portugal's democratic opposition, citing the hopelessness of their cause. At the same time, many of our allies were skeptical of the need to deploy intermediate missiles to match a Soviet buildup that was designed to target every NATO city in Europe.

The United States was not seen as a dominant superpower, but was beginning to have the earmarks of a fading one. In the wake of the SALT II treaty of 1972, the United States closed down its antiballistic missile defense while the Soviets kept theirs. The terms of SALT permitted the Soviet Union to take an overwhelming lead in intercontinental ballistic missiles.

In 1977, President Carter unilaterally terminated the B-1 bomber and development of the neutron bomb while cautioning Americans against "inordinate fear of communism."

Even the economic climate, for so long the greatest strength of the United States and its allies, appeared in question. Commentators were writing not about the end of socialism but about a crisis of capitalism. This consisted of such things as the transformation of industrial states into the Rust Belt, OPEC oil embargoes, drivers stalled in interminable lines to buy price-controlled gasoline, and the new phenomenon of "stagflation"—inflation and unemployment rising rapidly at the same time. The Club of Rome and other authoritative voices cautioned the West to prepare for an "era of limits."

President Carter and the Democratic Congress enacted massive payroll tax increases and new energy taxes and price controls in 1977 and 1979. Extraordinary inflation moved into double digits in 1979 and 1980, lifting millions of taxpayers into higher and higher tax brackets in an unindexed tax code with rates ranging up to 70 percent.

Welfare rolls, violent crime, and illegal drug use were all skyrocketing in the United States. The most fashionable new cause among social activists was a movement for "welfare rights." Carter's special White House adviser for narcotics, Dr. Peter Bourne, advocated selective decriminalization of drugs, and was forced to resign when it was learned he was putting his ideas into practice by writing illegal prescriptions to fellow administration officials suffering from stress.

In his 1981 inaugural address, Reagan cautioned Americans that things would not get better all at once—and they did not. Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker, appointed in 1979 by President Carter to fight a worldwide run on the dollar, sat on the economy by keeping short-term interest rates as high as 18 percent, and the Reagan recession of 1981-82 proved to be the worst since the Great Depression. The unemployment rate peaked at nearly 11 percent one year after congressional enactment of the Reagan tax cuts. Yet Reagan, his popularity dipping well below 40 percent, refused to attack Volcker and urged voters to "stay the course" on tax policy. The Republican party was hammered in the congressional and gubernatorial elections of 1982.

In the Cold War, Reagan's early moves seemed equally unavailing. He endorsed and redoubled Carter's effort to match Soviet intermediate missile deployments in Europe, but the nuclear freeze movement, which opposed all NATO deployments, pretty much took control of the streets of Western Europe and gained increasing influence in the United States.

Beginning with his first budget, Reagan initiated a huge military buildup. It was widely seen as an act of catch-up, inspired mainly by fear of Soviet intentions. Reagan did believe the Soviet military machine was awesome and increasingly dangerous, but he sensed that the rest of Moscow's physical resources had been stretched thin to support it. Continued denial of most-favored-nation trade status, diplomatic obstruction of the European-financed Soviet oil pipeline, inauguration of the Reagan Doctrine of support for anti-Communist insurgency in the Third World, and announcement of the Strategic Defense Initiative were all designed to strain the Soviet economic base further, or at least serve notice that the Soviets could expect such stretching well into the foreseeable future.

In his very first presidential press conference in 1981, Reagan described the Soviet leaders as men who will tell any lie to achieve their aims. Most reporters and commentators, and not a few of his own supporters, assumed Reagan had made a rhetorical blunder. But it was no more inadvertent than his provocative description of the Soviet Union as headed for the "ash heap of history" the following year, or his "evil empire" line in 1983. Reagan believed that communism was based on lies, and that telling the truth about it could have an impact far beyond what the experts imagined.

The Soviet leadership of the early 1980s responded with a hostility as menacing as the most dovish of Reagan's

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critics could have predicted or feared. The latter part of 1982, soon after the London speech, saw the rise to supreme power of former KGB head Yuri Andropov, the man who almost certainly gave final approval to the assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II the year before. Andropov was probably the most brilliant of Soviet leaders other than Lenin, and by far the most dangerous given his audacity and the offensive military power at his disposal. The Soviet shootdown of a civilian Korean airliner in 1983, and in particular the Soviet leader's utterly contemptuous, unapologetic reaction to it, had an air of imminent potential destruction about it. How close the world may have come to nuclear war we will not learn until much more is known about the politics of the 1982-84 period in the Kremlin, including the circumstances of Andropov's succession and his unexpected death in early 1984.

When the noticeably less dynamic Konstantin Chernenko succeeded Andropov, Reagan gently opened the door to a resumption of arms negotiations. With the succession of Mikhail Gorbachev on Chernenko's death a year later, Reagan almost instantly adopted Gorbachev as a friend and took superpower relations on a dizzying 180-degree turn that unnerved some of his staunchest supporters.

But in 1986 at Reykjavik, Reagan rejected a seemingly generous Gorbachev arms proposal that would have involved our restricting SDI to the laboratory in exchange for a huge reduction in Soviet offensive missiles. A visibly angry Reagan walked out of the talks against the wishes of his advisers and against the backdrop of withering attacks from the establishment media. Yet a year later, Gorbachev returned to the table offering almost identical offensive reductions with no restrictions on SDI, and in 1988 he ordered a unilateral withdrawal of the Red Army from Afghanistan. The end game of the Cold War had begun and, with it, the unraveling of Soviet communism.

Why did Reagan reject the tempting deal in Iceland—described by then-national security adviser Robert McFarlane as the "steal of the century"—against the near-unanimous advice of his aides? The reason he gave at the time in his speech to the American people should be taken at face value: He believed it would be wrong to agree to leave the American people unprotected from nuclear attack. It was reminiscent of an equally counterintuitive decision five years earlier, when—also against near-unanimous advice—Reagan fired every striking air traffic controller in the country, knowing that a single subsequent accident could destroy his presidency. He did it because he believed striking against the public was wrong and must not be tolerated.

The Iran-contra scandal, in which Reagan attempted to negotiate the release of American hostages by means of secret arms sales to the Islamist regime in Iran, was the gravest threat to Reagan's presidency not just because it didn't work and subsequently came to light. It was threatening because more than any other event in his eight years, it went against the grain of what made Reagan successful: his belief that there is an absolute right and wrong, and his determination to act, and to persevere, in what he knew to be right. The American people, and steadily increasing millions around the world, understood and respected this quality in Reagan and were disconcerted when he was caught doing what he had said was wrong.

This is a central lesson of Reagan's political success—American voters will trust a leader who believes in right and wrong and acts on it, even at his own seeming expense. And the reverse is also true: Reagan trusted the American people, believing that they are both good and gifted, equal to almost any challenge thrown at them.

Against a widespread fatalism in 1970s America, Reagan believed that the people would respond to the economic incentives of his deep tax-rate reductions, to overnight dismantlement of Nixon- and Carter-era energy price controls, and even the severe monetary crunch engineered by the Volcker Fed to end double-digit inflation. He was right, but was reluctant to take personal credit for achievements he attributed to the determination and competence of his fellow citizens.

These domestic successes were deeply intertwined with his successes abroad—and not just in the material sense that the success of Reaganomics helped make possible the Reagan arms buildup and his forward strategy in the Cold War. The vision that moved Reagan most of all was America as a shining city on a hill, exerting magnetic power on the rest of the world. And as one of his biographers, Dinesh D'Souza, has written, "his American exceptionalism was inextricably united with American universalism."

Reagan believed that people everywhere aspire to what Americans already have—democratic self-government based on the central belief of the American founding, which is also the main driving force in American history: that all men are created equal.

American elites seldom understood or respected Reagan at any stage of his career. A rare exception came in a *Washington Post* editorial in his second term, which noted with bemusement that when Reagan ventured abroad, he found not just the nation but the world was his oyster.

It was no accident. Ronald Reagan was the decisive figure of the American century because he believed in and successfully acted out our deepest principles, in a way that made them believable and accessible to more of the world's people than ever before. ♦

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One of a Kind

Nine reasons the world would have been different if someone else had won the 1980 election

By Fred Barnes

Nine men ran for president in 1980. Nine big issues would be decided by whoever won: taxes, monetary policy, the air traffic controllers' strike, deployment of Pershing missiles in Europe, missile defense, Soviet communism, anti-Communist wars of liberation, tax reform, national spirit. Ronald Reagan took a bold approach, consistent with his conservative principles, on all nine—and won. Three or four of the other candidates, if elected, might have acted similarly on a few issues, but not on all nine. That is why the election of Reagan mattered so much and why the world was changed so dramatically for the better as a result.

The other candidates were President Jimmy Carter and Senator Edward Kennedy, both Democrats, Republican senators Howard Baker and Bob Dole, House members John Anderson and Phil Crane, former Treasury secretary John Connally, and George H.W. Bush. Carter and Kennedy and probably Anderson would have decided differently from Reagan on all nine issues. Crane, Dole, and Connally would likely have come the closest to matching Reagan—but not that close.

Let's look at the nine:

• ***Taxes.*** With a large budget deficit, would any of the candidates have held out for a 25 percent cut in tax rates on individual income? Probably not. Carter and Kennedy opposed tax cuts and Bush called Reagan's plan "voodoo economics." Baker, Dole, Connally, and Anderson were not noted tax cutters. Crane? Maybe. Baker, as Senate majority leader in 1981, was queasy about the Reagan cuts, calling them a "riverboat gamble." Now we know the consequences of the cuts, a rejuvenated economy. Reagan was right.

To discredit Reagan, economist Paul Krugman of the *New York Times* noted that Reagan twice raised taxes. Krugman also made this point to zing President Bush for sticking with his tax cuts. Reagan, however, kept the cuts he'd proposed, plus one measure—indexing—which had been added on the Senate floor. For the most part, the tax breaks he wiped away had no incentive effects and had been tacked on to his original proposal. When Reagan took office, the top income tax rate was 70 percent. When he left, it was 28 percent. Tax raiser? Hardly.

• ***Monetary policy.*** Remember "stagflation," the simultaneous presence of high inflation and stagnant growth that, in the Carter years, seemed intractable? It wasn't.

To eliminate inflation, Reagan allowed Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker to crunch the money supply and cause the deepest recession since the Great Depression. Republican and Democratic politicians insisted Volcker should let up. Not Reagan. He didn't utter a peep of protest.

Newsweek columnist Robert J. Samuelson called Reagan's hands-off approach "one of his greatest triumphs." Indeed it was. Reagan and Volcker touched off two decades (and counting) of low inflation. In other words, permanent low inflation. "No other major leader—Republican or Democrat—would have then done what Reagan did," Samuelson wrote last week. Exactly right.

• ***Air traffic controllers' strike.*** Reagan surprised the world, including the senior White House staff and his cabinet, by firing the controllers, who had violated their legal and personal obligation not to strike. More than any decision in Reagan's first year in office, this action provided a huge clue about Reagan: He was not to be trifled with. And that's exactly how Reagan saw it. "This episode was an early test of my administration's resolve," he wrote in 1989 after leaving the White House. "We had the choice of caving in to unreasonable demands while keeping our air traffic system operating without incident, or of taking a stand for what we thought was right with the risk of throwing the system into possible chaos. I felt we had to do what was right." He refused to hire the controllers back later.

• ***Pershing missiles.*** Germany had promised to accept the American missiles in 1983 to checkmate Soviet SS-20s targeted on Western Europe. But the Soviets, millions of peace marchers in Europe, and a popular "nuclear freeze" movement in the United States mounted strong opposition. Nonetheless, Reagan ordered the deployment of the Pershings, and the Soviets promptly stormed out of arms

Fred Barnes is executive editor of The Weekly Standard.

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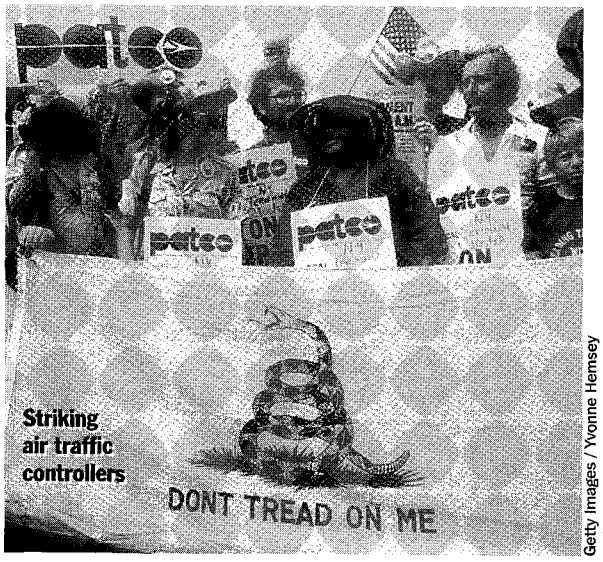
control talks in Geneva. Washington went into a tizzy. Reagan's aides feared he'd be stuck with a reputation as a warmonger. Of the Soviets, Reagan said confidently, "They'll be back." Soon they were, ready to negotiate a treaty on eliminating their SS-20s. Would others have had the nerve to carry this off? Not a chance.

• ***Missile defense.*** This was the greatest bargaining chip of all time. The Soviets were deathly afraid that their entire offensive missile force would be neutralized by what Reagan called his Strategic Defense Initiative and critics called Star Wars. American doubters said missile defense was a fantasy, but Reagan believed missile defense could provide a shield over the entire United States. He was adamant about pursuing it.

A moment of truth occurred at the Reykjavik summit with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1986. Gorbachev was prepared to eliminate all nuclear weapons—his own and Reagan's—if Reagan would give up the development of missile defense. Reagan refused. Instantly the Soviets, especially Soviet generals, realized they'd lost the Cold War. They couldn't keep up an arms race. Reagan had broken their will, and undermined their faith in their system. Reagan alone could have done this.



Striking air traffic controllers

Getty Images / Yvonne Hemsey

• ***Communism.*** For more than three decades, the bipartisan policy toward Soviet communism consisted of containment and détente. The idea was to keep the Soviets from expanding the Communist empire and coexist peacefully with them. As Henry Kissinger is supposed to have said, America was Athens, the Soviet Union was Sparta. The only hope for America was to work out a deal with the Soviets.

Reagan thought otherwise. He stood the policy on its head, tossing aside the postwar consensus and seeking to defeat the Communists and roll back their "evil empire." Few Americans felt this was possible, but Reagan said in 1982 that communism would wind up on the "ash heap of history." He did everything short of war to ensure that result. Reagan, the boldest of hard-liners, succeeded where others wouldn't have tried. He said he simply "began applying conservatism to foreign policy."

• ***Wars of national liberation.*** These had been the chief means of enlarging the Soviet empire. It was one thing to oppose this type of expansion, as the United States had. It was quite another to seek the demise of the Soviet Union and its satellites. And it was a still bolder leap to support anti-Communist wars of liberation to take back countries lost to Communist takeovers. It was beyond the imagination, much less the inclination, of the State Department and the political establishment.

Carter had aided Afghan rebels against Soviet occupiers, sending them pre-World War II rifles. Reagan stepped up the support many times over, sending Stinger missiles. In Nicaragua, he backed the contras, a coalition of peasants and remnants of the old Somoza regime. Liberals and much of the world fumed at the policy, but Reagan didn't flinch. The Soviet empire shrank before collapsing altogether in 1991. Reagan alone had foreseen this.

• ***Tax reform.*** Who thought this would happen? Practically nobody. The standard practice was for presidents to talk up tax reform, then abandon the idea. That's what Carter did. The conventional wisdom in Washington was that there was no constituency for cutting rates, repealing special interest loopholes, and broadening the tax base. Reagan comprised a constituency of one, which turned out to be sufficient.

• ***National spirit.*** That Reagan, more than anyone else, drove away the gloomy, defeatist mood of the 1970s is a fact. We have this on the authority of former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, who praised Reagan last week for leading "the great cause of cheering us all up." Given his optimism and eloquence and storehouse of upbeat anecdotes, this now seems like no big deal. But who else could have done it? John Connally perhaps? John Anderson maybe? Howard Baker? A reelected Jimmy Carter? These questions answer themselves.

A half century ago, philosopher Sidney Hook drew a distinction between an eventful man and an event-making man. The key difference is that while both may arrive at a fork in the historical road, the event-making man helped to create the fork. The event-making man also "leaves the positive imprint of his personality upon history—an imprint that is still observable after he has disappeared from the scene." That's Reagan exactly. He not only seized opportunities successfully, he created them. This puts him in a class by himself among postwar presidents. And it reflects well on the wisdom of the American voters who chose him in 1980 over eight rivals for the presidency. ♦

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A Man of Ideas

His great achievements owe less to personality than to policy

By Harvey C. Mansfield

Ronald Reagan was a partisan president and remains one. Our greatest presidents, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, were America's founder and its savior, and they are held in esteem, or revered, by all. But to like Reagan without reservations, you have to be of his party. Otherwise, you can admire certain of his qualities, but much of what he did you will not approve of. In this Reagan resembles Franklin D. Roosevelt, another partisan president who remains a hero to his party and is grudgingly admired by the party opposite (while having been openly admired by Reagan himself).

Reagan was not as successful a partisan as Roosevelt. Reagan did not found a durable majority for his party as Roosevelt did for his. His elections in 1980 and particularly in 1984 were not "critical elections" like Roosevelt's in 1932 but personal victories with modest advantage, or even losses, for his party in Congress. Although Reagan's vice president did succeed him for one term, the Democrats regained the presidency with Bill Clinton's election in 1992. No doubt new circumstances reducing the strength of party organization and loyalty made it harder for Reagan to achieve a lasting party majority; and he did succeed in pushing the Clinton administration to the right. But he had an ambition comparable to Roosevelt's, promising at his first inaugural in 1981 to undertake an "era of national renewal."

The nation to be renewed was the one Roosevelt and his successors had corrupted by rendering the American people too dependent on government. The people's self-rule was the element to be renewed. Asked Reagan: "If no one among us is capable of governing himself, then who among us is capable of governing someone else?" Reagan hit this theme much earlier, in 1964, when giving an address on behalf of Barry Goldwater's campaign, known to Reaganites as "The Speech," the one that first gained him national attention and that prepared his run for governor of California in 1966.

His presidential majority in 1980 was composed of Goldwater's following of "conservatives" and of Richard Nixon's "silent majority," which included Democrats disgusted with the takeover of their party by the New Left, the contingent that made George McGovern the Democratic candidate in 1972. These "Reagan Democrats" from ethnic minorities drew closer to conservatism than they had been when voting for Nixon. Reagan was as eager to win as Nixon but more persuasive and more confident that his ideas could prevail without the cover of disguise.

Reagan, however, was always more Republican than conservative. Because he thought he could win Democrats to his ideas, he did not need the coherence of a doctrine—or wish for its inflexibility. What came to be known as the "Reagan Revolution" comprised major departures not only from the status quo but also from conservative orthodoxy.

A self-made man educated at a small college in Illinois and then employed as an actor in Hollywood, he did not hobnob with intellectuals but worked out his own ideas. His lack of breeding earned him the contempt of liberal intellectuals who typecast him as (in Clark Clifford's words) an "amiable dunce." In fact he was a reflective man who chose among the ideas of his time without regard to convention or fashion.

Having an actor's career did not prevent Reagan from thinking on his own but rather let him learn how to communicate. It takes thought to convey a thought. An actor communicates a general idea through the representation of a particular character such as "the Gipper." And President Reagan became the "Great Communicator" with just this device in his speeches: He kept them simple, kept repeating the same ideas, and always illustrated them with a joke or a story.

He was the best jokester in the presidency since Lincoln, and not all his lines were given to him. Wheeled

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Harvey C. Mansfield is a professor of government at Harvard. This article is excerpted from Presidential Leadership *by James Taranto and Leonard Leo, foreword by William J. Bennett.* *Copyright © 2004 by Dow Jones & Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Wall Street Journal Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, Inc., N.Y.*

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into a hospital emergency room wounded after the assassination attempt in 1981, he looked at the surgeons and said: "I hope you're all Republicans." His speeches usually featured stories of individuals like the ones he was addressing, only somehow distinctive and illustrative. Presidents since Reagan have tried to imitate his skilled rhetorical instinct for the exemplary.

What were Reagan's ideas? Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan said with nonpartisan insight in 1980 that the Republicans were the party of ideas even though not the party of the intellectuals. Yet in foreign policy Reagan challenged the thinking of the leading Republican intellectual, Henry Kissinger, in a way that Kissinger himself explained: "Reagan was the first postwar president to take the offensive." He was dissatisfied with the policy of détente because it depended on the mutual vulnerability of the Soviet Union and the United States. It equalized the two powers not only militarily but also morally, thus freezing the status quo. This meant, Reagan saw, that the United States was accepting the legitimacy of its adversary and could not assert the moral superiority of its own freedom. Reagan, in a famous speech of March 1983 that shocked the sophisticates of realism and relativism, did not hesitate to call America good and the Soviet Union an "evil empire."

From the first, Reagan began a deliberate campaign to raise the "costs of empire" for the Soviet Union, especially (but not only) by supplying the Afghans defending themselves against the Soviet invasion of December 1979. In Europe he got an intermediate nuclear force installed over strenuous opposition from the left. Discerning (contrary to most experts) that the Soviet Union was weaker than it appeared and ripe for overthrow, Reagan determined to run an arms race that he thought it would lose.

His key measure was the Strategic Defense Initiative, or SDI, a program for missile defense dubbed Star Wars by critics ridiculing it as science fiction. Fiction or not (SDI is yet unfinished and unproven), it convinced Soviet generals and leaders that they could not compete, and the evil empire began to disintegrate. Reagan, having originally rejected "summitry" but now turning diplomat, joined with the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in a deal for arms reduction that proved to be the prelude for Communist collapse in the beginning of the first Bush administration. When Reagan at Berlin in 1987 memorably called on Gorbachev to "tear down this wall!" it was not the vain hope it seemed to many.

By taking the offensive Reagan brought final success to the largely defensive policy of containing communism that America had begun in 1945. He saw that America could "stay the course" (a favorite phrase) by departing from the course, and looking back now, one can see that this was his great achievement.

During his administration foreign affairs took second place in the eyes of the public to his efforts on behalf of the "opportunity society," his domestic policy. Like Theodore Roosevelt, he proposed that government should open opportunity to Americans, and thus reengage their capacity for self-rule. To do this Reagan departed again from Republican fiscal orthodoxy to support supply-side economics, called Reaganomics by his Democratic critics. Although he began by accusing the Democrats of piling deficit upon deficit, he soon declared that he would not balance the budget on the backs of the American taxpayer. He cut taxes, spent on defense, and let the deficit grow—thinking thereby to inhibit the domestic spending of the Democrats in control of Congress.

In everything he was optimistic and radiated optimism: "America's best days are ahead of her." He was averse to gloom, malaise (in contrast to President Carter), and sacrifice, yet he demanded greatness from his country. He gave the impression that from the industry and generosity of Americans and from the spontaneous freedom of human nature, greatness would come easy.

A stain on his presidency was the scandal in his foreign policy, the Iran-contra affair, in which Reagan's lieutenants sought to evade a law forbidding U.S. aid to the contras, the anti-Communist fighters in Nicaragua. It showed the risks he would take and the perils of his system of delegation. It also showed how far the Democrats in Congress would go in taking the part of a Communist government against counterrevolutionaries.

Reagan's claim to presidential greatness is that by deliberate but energetic policy and with peaceful means, and against the advice of the experts and the obstruction of partisan opponents, he won the Cold War that America waged for 45 years against one of the three worst regimes known in human history.

Reagan's domestic legacy has been lasting but controversial: In the declining era of big government he rallied the conservatives, gave them the taste of victory, and left them a hero to cheer. He resolved nothing, but his was an important episode in America's back-and-forth political history between the party that promotes and the party that restrains the people (this is Alexis de Tocqueville's distinction). Blurring the distinction, Reagan was a Republican whose gifts and policies brought his party from one that restrains the people closer to one that sets them free. ♦

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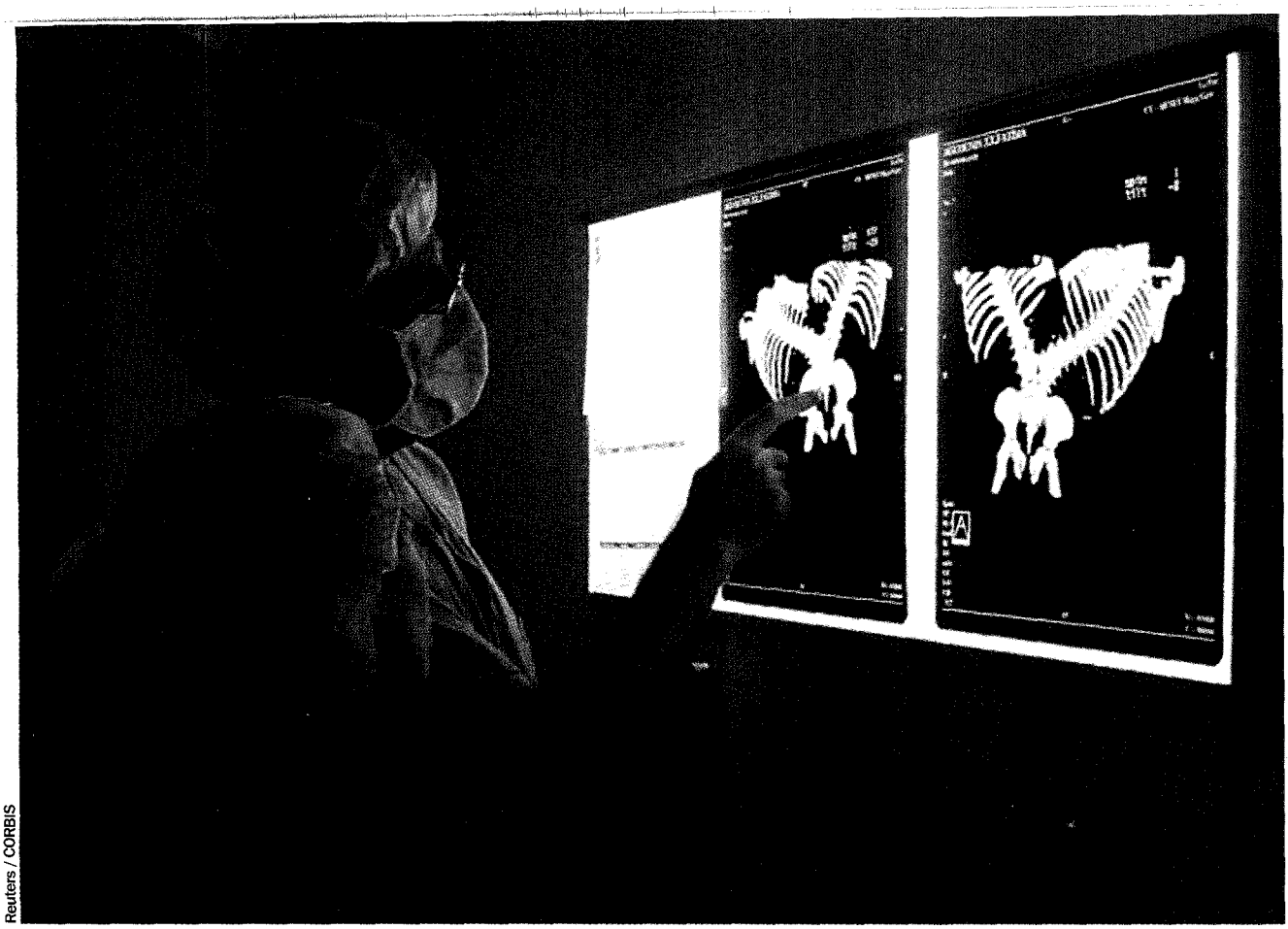

Reuters / CORBIS

Body and Soul

Roy Porter on the body of Enlightenment thought By JOSEPH EPSTEIN

Near the first of the year, I found myself on a long weekend in Buffalo, New York—staying, as I joked at the time, at the One Seasons Hotel—when I noted a throbbing in my left thumb. I thought that I had perhaps bruised the thumb without realizing it at the time. As the weekend progressed it grew more swollen and redder, the throbbing greater.

Preferring not to rush off to a doctor, I thought I might await the cessation of what seemed at best a negligible problem. Back in Chicago, so great did the throbbing become that I felt I wouldn't be able to sleep under its insistent pressure, and so, it being early evening, I didn't call our family physician, but took myself to the emergency room of a nearby hospital.

There the triage nurse noted the appearance of red lines running up my left forearm, which meant that infection had set in. When, roughly three hours later, I saw a young emergency-room physician, he lanced the thumb through the nail, out of which a pearl-size bead of pus oozed. Because I happened to be taking a very small dosage of the drug Prednisone, the infection put my immune system in jeopardy, and he felt that I must spend the night in the hospital lashed to an IV dripping antibiotics into my bloodstream.

Flesh in the Age of Reason
The Modern Foundations of Body and Soul
by Roy Porter
W.W. Norton, 660 pp., $29.95

Had I waited another day or so before coming into the hospital, this doctor said, I might have been in serious trouble. He then told me of a woman he had under care who had what she thought a pimple on her bottom that turned out to be a flesh-eating strep that, having been neglected, landed her in intensive care, where she was, at the moment, fighting to remain alive.

Swollen thumbs, harmless-seeming pimples, diseases arcane and common, many with no known cause or cure, not to speak of cancers just beginning to go on the boil and exotic new deadly diseases freshly revealed almost monthly, the wondrous machine that is the human body is also, when one thinks about it, frightfully fragile.

Best not to think too much about it, my own nonscientific view has long been. The older one gets, of course, the

Joseph Epstein is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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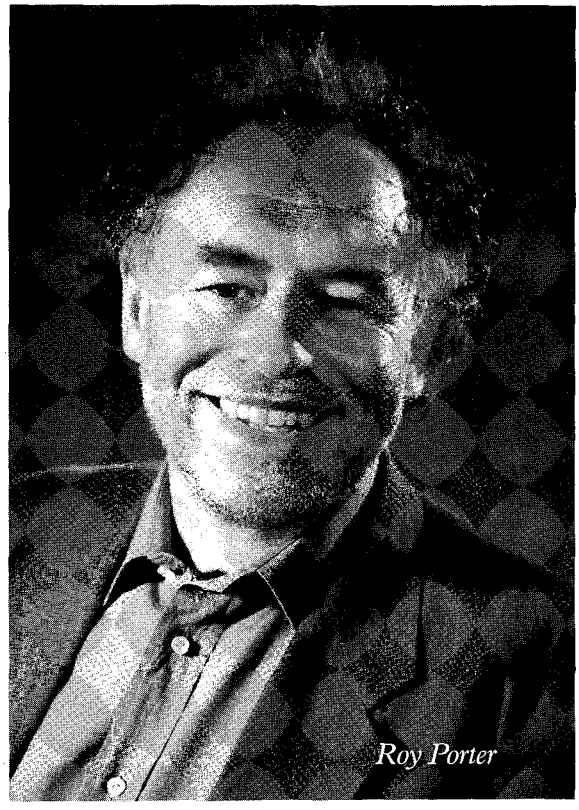
less one is able to achieve this fine state of deliberate indifference. Things fall apart, parts wear out, subtractions—in the realms of teeth, hair, strength, coordination—seem relentless. Just when the wisdom earned through experience ought to kick in, the body kicks not back but out. Not so fast, friend, it declares, you're my prisoner, imprisoned in your own slowly but inexorably rotting flesh, and with no hope for parole in sight.

What is worse, the body often acts as if it is in business for itself. The state of one's body affects one's mind more often than the other way round. Not mind over matter, but matter over mind, generally seems the order of the day. "It is not usually our ideas that make us optimists or pessimists," Miguel de Unamuno writes, "But it is our optimism or our pessimism, a physiological or perhaps pathological origin, as much the one as the other, that makes our ideas."

Our greatest efforts at physical control frequently come to naught: causing us to twitch, tremble, blush, weep, lose consciousness despite our strongest will to do otherwise. Organs, glands, and intestines go about their solemn work, requiring micturition, flatulation, defecation, ejaculation, belching, burping, yawning, and hiccuping—while in the engine room (as one would like to think of the mind) one is earnestly trying to determine, say, why there have been no major poets born after 1900. I recently read about Hermann Jellinek, a revolutionary about to be executed by hanging in Vienna during the revolution of 1848, who remarked: "My spirit is calm. I hope my body will not play tricks with me." Alas, it probably did, since at the point of hanging, I have read, all sphincteral control is lost.

The issue at the center of the body-mind problem is which of the two, body or mind, is supreme, which is at the wheel, which is really in possession of the remote and selecting all the channels? The answer has never been clear. Contemplation of the world's most powerful ideals or magnificent works of art cannot relieve the pain of a toothache. Neither is enduring pain likely to make one wiser. Considerations of the mind-body problem usually end in a cat's game.

In a life of grand creation and epic dissipation, Roy Porter reports in *Flesh in the Age of Reason*, nothing seems to have given Lord Byron greater gratification than dropping forty-five pounds, going from 196 to 151 pounds, the result of strenuous exercise while wearing seven waistcoats and a greatcoat and eating only one meal a day and drinking no malt liquor whatsoever. Are not most of us trapped in our vanities, hostage to our bodies, terrified about their letting us down, turning us grotesque by our habits or through old age, weakening us beyond thought and even decency?


Roy Porter

Courtesy of W.W. Norton

Porter's *Flesh in the Age of Reason* is a lengthy, unsystematic, fascinating study of the changing nature of thoughts about the relation of mind and body, especially as they shifted in eighteenth-century Enlightenment England, a time when religious constraints, and with them theological ideas, were loosened and lost their grip, and were replaced by what passed for scientific reasoning. The book is an extraordinary intellectual performance, the final work by an English historian who died, in 2002, at the age of fifty-five. A specialist in the history of medicine and psychiatry, Porter wrote and edited more than sixty books on such varied subjects as the City of London, gout, friendship, the earth sciences, cosmology, and spiritualism.

The subject that ties almost all of Roy Porter's work together is his quest to understand human nature. *Flesh in the Age of Reason*, completed just before his death, is perhaps his most comprehensive attempt at this ambitious project, and while it does not provide anything like a persuasive answer to the large question of why we are as we are, in our grandeur and in our squalor, it does offer a splendid survey of the answers tendered by some of the most brilliant and idiosyncratic minds in that most intellectually glittering of times, eighteenth-century Enlightenment England.

Flesh in the Age of Reason examines how the self was understood and transformed by "educated elites—opinion makers—[as they] grappled with anxieties as to their nature, individuality, and destiny as thinking and feeling humans." Without claiming to be representative, let alone definitive, the book also attempts to chronicle how, as Porter puts it, "the demise of the soul came about," by which he means the centrality of the soul in the minds of those thinking about these matters. This will of course come as striking news to many people who continue to believe they possess an undiminished soul, but then another part of Porter's story has to do with philosophers' and

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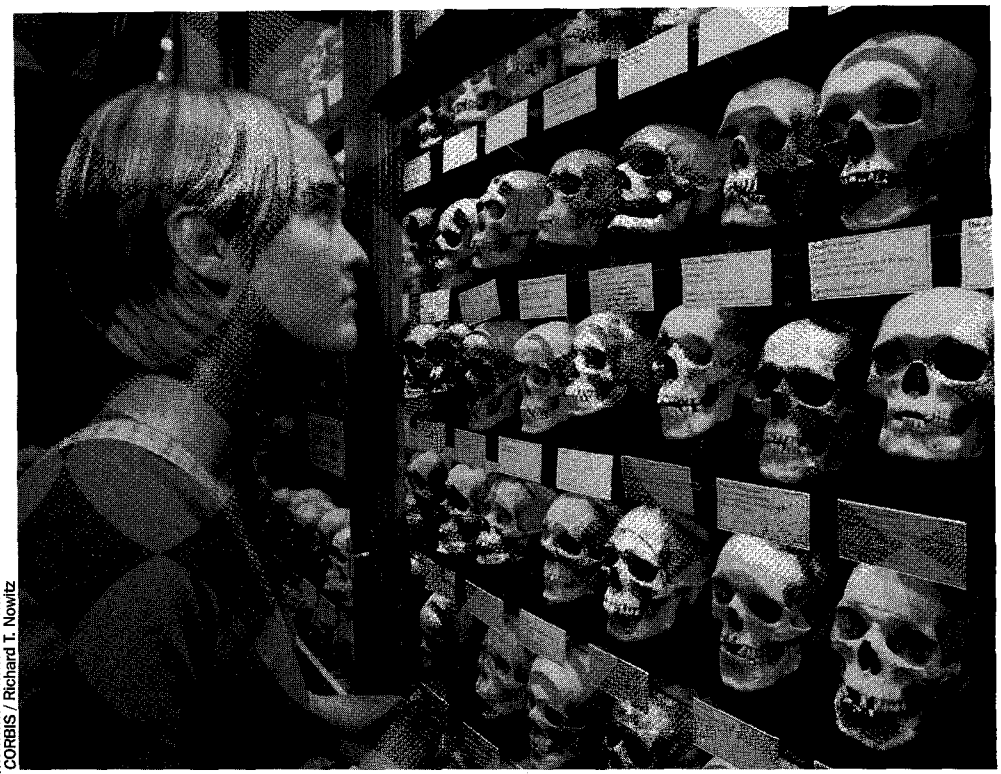
scientists' attempt to wrest the domain of the soul from Christian theology and transfer its functions to the mind.

The eighteenth century ended, of course, before two big pieces of startling news arrived: The first was Darwin's discovery that human beings derive from lower forms of life; and the second was Freud's invocation to look inside ourselves, where we are likely to find things much less pleasing than we had imagined. An earlier piece of news—the messenger in this instance being a Pole named Nicolas Copernicus—had it that the earth was not the center of the universe and, like as not, neither were human beings.

All this put the idea of a God-driven, soul-centered universe in doubt. But even before, something in human beings would not allow them to live too comfortably with the abstractions required by religion. As Porter recounts, people early began asking such questions about the dimensions, the actual square footage, of heaven and hell if it could accommodate so many souls; and, if youth is returned to everyone in heaven, how will one recognize one's grandmother? Not content to believe in the insubstantiality of the soul, as rugged a realist as Thomas Hobbes believed it was located in the pineal gland.



CORBIS / Richard T. Nowitz

An Enlightenment man with a propensity to mock religion, Roy Porter begins his book discussing the way the Greeks regarded the soul and the relations between it and the body. Aristotle, notably, thought of body and soul as wedded, "potentiality to actualization." Plato, much more poetically, saw the two in struggle, and condemned bodily appetites as inimical to freedom and even dignity. For Christianity the soul, then as now, was absolutely central; the soul was immortal, the body earthbound. What is the body, wrote the Puritan William Prynne in the 1630s, but *"a loathsome Masse of dust and ashes, brittle as a glasse."* The two, body and soul, could be counted upon always to war against each other.

The argument was framed very differently on the continent with the advent of René Descartes, who decided that not soul but mind was what distinguished human beings. His famous 1637 *cogito ergo sum*, "I think, therefore I am," may be the shortest sentence with the most farreaching implications in the history of thought. "The importance of Descartes," as Porter writes, "lay in his boldly designating the soul as a philosophical rather than a religious principle, an immaterial thinking subject." His significance lies in converting the soul to the mind, and in asserting the predominance of free will in human behavior. Descartes thought, and we all are.

The other great philosophical player in Roy Porter's story is John Locke, who in his 1689 *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* held that we all come into this world as a *tabula rasa*—a blank slate—and that we are what we learn and experience and what we remember of our learning and experience. Perhaps this explains the terror of witnessing a person with advanced Alzheimer's Disease; stripped of both his learning and experience, he no longer seems the same person—or, often, like a person at all.

"Consciousness," Locke wrote, "is Self." Consciousness is at the heart of Locke's doctrine, and consciousness comprised the "Totality of Impressions, Thoughts and Feelings, which make up a person's conscious Being." This marks the advance of Locke's thought over Descartes's. It's one thing to know that one exists because one can think—and another to be self-aware so that one is able to perceive oneself in the act of thinking.

In brief portraits, Roy Porter runs through the history of thought on the mind-body problem of the famous—and sometimes not so famous—figures of the eighteenth century. *Flesh in the Age of Reason* is especially useful in summarizing the thought of several lesser-known but often crucial figures: names that have passed the philosophical and scientific amateur on the express train of a desultory reading life, among them Robert Boyle, David Hartley, Joseph Priestley, Thomas Willis, Bernard de Mandeville, Dugald Stewart, Thomas Beddoes, Erasmus Darwin, and many others.

On the more securely famous side, Porter provides succinct profiles of David Hume, the Earl of Shaftsbury, Jonathan Swift, Adam Smith, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, all of whom weighed in significantly on the mind-body problem. Samuel Johnson, a key English Enlightenment figure who never strayed from his profoundly held

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Christian belief and greatly feared his own extinction, felt that God gave people free will so that their souls could triumph over their flesh. His friend James Boswell, meanwhile, wondered if there would be claret in heaven and hoped, relentless skirt-chaser that he was, that women would also be there. Edward Gibbon, an unbeliever trapped in a small, pudgy, gout-ridden body, was unconcerned about the condition of his soul, in disbelief about an afterlife, and felt little sadness in leaving no children. But, then, he left three volumes of the greatest historical work written in English, which would grant him greater immortality than any line of offspring could hope to provide. Laurence Sterne, in *Tristram Shandy*, was pleased to remind his readers how very body-bound we all are, and to point out the absurdity of our thinking we can surmount the insistently rude and comical demands of our bodies.

A criticism of Roy Porter is that on subjects on which one already knows something, he seems thin. And this is largely so: He hasn't much fresh to say about Johnson, Gibbon, Sterne, Mary Wollstonecraft, or Hazlitt. Yet Porter's reading across the two cultures—scientific and literary—was impressively wide, and he knew a vast deal about many subjects about which one is unlikely ever to have heard.

Consider, as an example, Thomas Day, a member of the Birmingham-based Lunar Society (of which Eramus Darwin was a key member) and a follower of the doctrines of Rousseau, who attempted a Pygmalion project by picking out two young girls from foundling homes to teach them a proper contempt for luxury, social status, and frivolity, and a love of domestic tranquility and matronly obedience. The experiment failed dismally, of course, although he blamed it on the girls' lack of intelligence. Always a man to put theory before practice, Day attempted to train a horse without the least cruelty—an experiment that ended with the horse's throwing him to his death.

Along with his wide-ranging portraiture of eighteenth-century figures, Porter provides a fund of tangential information on the changing ways in which the body was regarded. Slowly, the condition of the body, like that of the soul—after Locke, better thought of as the mind—began to seem less predetermined. Thinness or corporeality became subject to (alternating) fashion. Suicide came to seem more sad than sinful. Insanity, no longer thought purely a God-given infestation of the spirit, became treatable. Death itself became "medicalized." Porter quotes the eighteenth-century physician John Ferriar: "When all hopes of revival are lost, it is still the last duty of the physician to sooth the last moments of existence." More and more priests were replaced by physicians at bedside before death. It all begins to smell suspiciously like progress.

But, not to worry, a true picture of human nature came no closer in the eighteenth century than the arrival of utopia, and it seems unlikely to arrive much in advance of human perfectibility. Porter's summary of the paradox at the center of *Tristram Shandy* is also the conclusion most readers of *Flesh in the Age of Reason* may be expected to reach today: "Organism and consciousness, *soma* and psyche, heart and head, the outer and the inner—all merged and all needed to be minutely observed, if the human enigma were ever to be appreciated." But has it been?

As for Roy Porter's story of "the demise of the soul," to anyone sufficiently impressed with the mysteries of life, this demise seems greatly exaggerated. Science since the eighteenth century has accomplished so very much—medically, technologically, purely heuristically—failing only to answer the really serious questions. It still cannot explain the origin of the universe, how consciousness arises, how the brain turns into the mind. It cannot tell us why there is so much suffering in the world, or whence genius derives. Nor can it account for acts of unmotivated goodness and heroism. The mind-body problem is still that, a problem in search of a solution. Until science and philosophy can answer such questions and solve such problems, the time for ditching the soul is not yet at hand.

Should one add, *Amen?* ♦

Falling to Pieces

The playwright Simon Gray watches as the curtain starts to come down. BY HENRIK BERING

Unless you are a doctor or a dentist, there are certain things you would rather not know about your fellow man: the exact, clinical condition of his feet, his ears, or his teeth, for instance. Yet a few years back, in the memoir *Experience*, one found oneself reading with horrified fascination about British novelist Martin Amis and his decades-long battle with his rotting gums, told in great and gory detail, thus keeping up the family tradition of misanthropy, set by his father Kingsley.

The Smoking Diaries
by Simon Gray
Granta, 240 pp., £12.99

While Americans tend to be uncomfortable with the topic of aging—the highly sanitized movie *Grumpy Old Men* (1993) being typical, concentrating on the comic aspects of growing old and skipping the tragic part—the British seem to have a curious fascination with death and decay as a source of black comedy.

The current master of British misanthropy is the playwright Simon Gray. For a while, in the mid-1970s, Gray was hailed as one of the golden

Henrik Bering is a journalist and critic.

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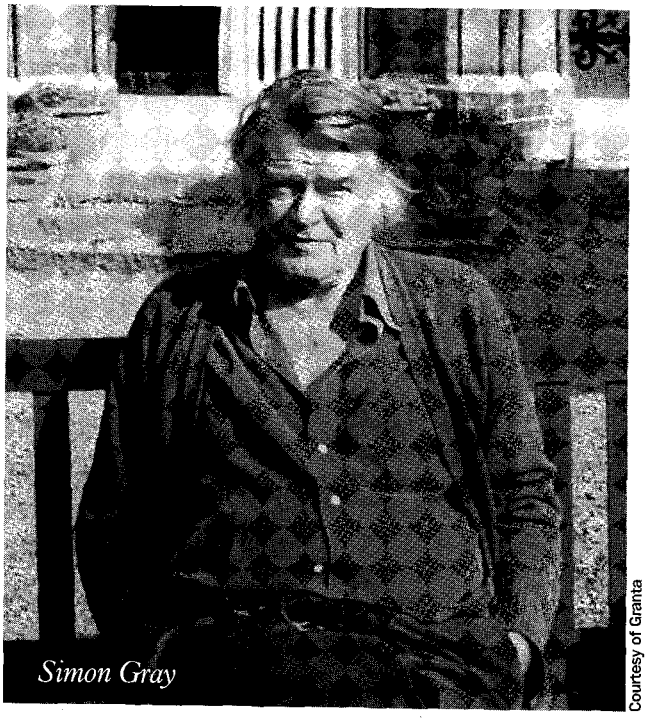
boys of British theater with plays like *Otherwise Engaged* and *Butley* to his credit. In those days, when he traveled, he traveled Concorde. Since then, life has been less smooth. His plays are somehow considered unfashionably middle class, and today, Gray is more known for his theatrical memoirs, which are gems of their kind. The 1995 *Fat Chance* tells the hilarious misfortune of his play *Cell Mates*, where one of its stars, the actor Stephen Fry, fled in a fit of panic to Belgium, leaving Gray and the cast holding the bag. Equally amusing is the 2001 *Enter a Fox*, which recounts how his play *The Late Middle Classes* was humiliatingly dropped in favor of a musical called *Boyband*, "this perfectly simple story of deceit, double-dealing, treachery, murder, and so forth," as he puts it.

Gray's latest book, *The Smoking Diaries*, is not yet published in America, but it has been hailed in Britain as a masterpiece of savage, tragicomic writing and has earned him the sobriquet "the poet laureate of dyspepsia." In a loose and casual form, it tells his life story—"the acid leaking out of the withered bladder of my spirit," in his own words. As a proponent of an unhealthy lifestyle, Gray has been compared to rock musician Keith Richards, another magnificently preserved ruin who somehow still keeps standing.



Simon Gray

Courtesy of Granta

In Gray's world, everything that can go wrong does go wrong and has done so for a long time. When the book starts, on his sixty-fifth birthday, his money is long gone, part of the great Lloyds insurance debacle of the early 1990s. His literary friends are either dead or dying. His own health is shot: After having a large part of his intestines removed, he has managed to quit his alcohol consumption, which used to be four bottles of champagne a day. But he still suffers occasional hallucinations of bees and maggots crawling over him.

And as a paranoid insomniac, he still smokes just over three packs of cigarettes a day, to which he has been addicted since the age of seven, and which now leaves him coughing and wheezing, making even tying his shoelaces a challenge. To top it off, in the middle of the book, he is diagnosed with prostate cancer and sees himself as participating in some ghastly competition with his friends where the cancer is handed off "like a poisoned baton in a relay race."

This may not strike the reader as immediately promising comic material. But Gray is the kind of writer whose talent feeds on adversity and who with wide-eyed incredulity embraces every new indignity that life throws at him. Even when he is on holiday, things go wrong. In Italy, the gentleman at the table next to his keels over and dies, and on Barbados, other tourists keep stealing his sunspot on the beach.

From a maze of casual digressions and musings, pet likes and dislikes, fears and phobias, the story of his life emerges. The son of a doctor, he spent his early childhood in Canada to where he was evacuated during the war and he delivers fine portraits of his grandma, smelling of peppermint to mask the sherry fumes, and of his repressed and jealous Scots granddad, who belts him for stealing her affection. He gives a splendid account of his teenage years at Westminster School, the posh London private school, where he and his friends were plundering the ticket machines of the Underground to finance his stash of Hank Janson detective novels with titles such as *Hotsy*, *You'll Be Chilled*, and *Lola Brought Her Wreath*—all with lurid covers of bound and trussed beauties.

He dissects the complex relationship of his parents: his easygoing, chain-smoking, slap-happy mother and his quiet father who turns out to be a serial adulterer. And he details the harrowing death of his brilliant younger brother Piers from alcoholism and liver failure.

Most unsparingly, Simon Gray exposes his own flaws and weaknesses, the failures and missed opportunities. Looking back at the carefree youth roaming the Italian Riviera, he describes himself now as "a sort of poor relation to my younger self," and he wonders where it all went.

So Gray's dyspepsia is readily explainable. The danger with misanthropy is of course the temptation for the author to descend into pure old-fartism, ranting and raving. In Gray's case, the effect of all the grumbling and of the digressions is to underscore the poignancy of the stricken person, who feels as if he has been exiled to another country, where his friends pay him awkward visits and go back to the normal world. Gray, of course, realizes that his ranting is futile. He does it anyway to make his point. The primal screams may be frequent, but there is no whining. Underneath all the noise one senses a stoic and rather brave acceptance of his lot. ♦

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Spanish Mysteries

Rebecca C. Pawel's latest detective story, set in Franco's Spain. BY JON L. BREEN

With the growing popularity of mystery fiction set in the past, every historical period may eventually have its own sleuthing series. Post-Civil War Spain has been staked out by one of the most capable new crime writers to emerge in recent years: a young New York City high-school teacher. On April 29, Rebecca C. Pawel's *Death of a Nationalist* won an Edgar Award from the Mystery Writers of America for best first novel of 2003, and her second, *Law of Return*, has already confirmed that debut's high promise.

As Pawel's award-winning work opens, the Civil War that ravaged Spain in 1936 is effectively over, and Generalíssimo Francisco Franco has assumed a control he won't relinquish until his death in 1975. But times continue to be hard. Food shortages leave much of the populace hungry, parts of the cities are in ruins, and raw political wounds continue to fester. Carlos Tejada Alonso y Léon is an officer of the Guardia Civil, charged with validating Franco's dubious claim that Spain is now at peace. Though such matters are always more complicated than they look, it's clear Tejada and his colleagues are on the winning side for the moment—but on the wrong side of history. Tejada is a Falangist, a Fascist, and thus seemingly an obvious villain. But he is not a Gestapo officer or death-camp custodian. He functions credibly as an essentially decent man who thinks he is doing the right thing, however it may look from a different time or place.

Like many fictional policemen, Tejada has educational and class advantages over most of his fellow officers. He came to the Guardia relatively late and from the university rather than the military academy, but achieved accelerated promotion to sergeant before his thirtieth birthday. Attracted to the military as a youth, Tejada followed his wealthy landowner father's wish that he study law, with the understanding he could join the army after graduation if he still wanted to. His interest in criminal law made the Guardia "an obvious compromise," though not one that pleased his family.

To his hero-worshipping young partner Jiménez, Tejada has the aura of both war hero and supersleuth. The police relationships follow a familiar pattern in procedural fiction: the tough, complex, sometimes ruthless but basically decent cop protagonist; his semicompetent partner; his demanding, difficult superior. But setting them against a historical background little explored in crime fiction makes all the difference. Pawel's treatment of Tejada's ambiguous position as a likable, even heroic figure representing a questionable regime is one of the keys to her two novels' appeal, along with the solid realization of time and place and the creation of vivid secondary characters.

One of the measures of a new practitioner is how mystery fiction's many conventions will be followed, tweaked, or (sometimes) subverted. Observe how Pawel plays with the reader's expectations in introducing Tejada's first case. It is early April 1939. Seven-year-old Maria Alejandra, walking home from school through the Madrid streets, hears gunshots and finds the body of a Guardia corporal who has been shot to death. In her panicked run home, she leaves behind her half-filled school notebook, an unthinkable thing to lose in a time of strict paper rationing. The child's aunt Viviana, a Nationalist sympathizer in her early twenties, sets out to retrieve the notebook. Meanwhile, Tejada and Jiménez have been dispatched to the scene by their superior, Lieutenant Ramos, with clear instructions to "arrest anyone in the neighborhood who seems suspicious" and "if they're Reds, put them up against a wall" and summarily execute them. Finding Tía Viviana crouching by the body, Tejada reasonably assumes she has committed the crime and that the notebook in her hand has some sinister significance.

Pawel has set up a classic dramatic situation: The wrongly accused murder suspect is a Communist; the good-guy cop investigating the case is a Fascist. How will justice be done? Will a star-crossed romance ensue? The possibilities for suspense and conflict are more than sufficient, but what happens next shockingly undercuts the reader's expectations. Tejada feels certain Tía Viviana is guilty of murder, and he

A regular writer on mystery fiction for THE WEEKLY STANDARD, *Jon L. Breen is the winner of two Edgar awards.*

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knows gang rape awaits a female prisoner. So he decides the most humane course, as well as the most expedient, is to follow the letter of his instructions from his superior. He shoots her in cold blood. Later, of course, Tejada will realize he has executed an innocent person, and he will be sorry. But given how cheaply human life can be valued in wartime, he is far from being as devastated by the knowledge as the reader might wish.

The murdered member of the Guardia proves to be Francisco López Pérez, with whom Tejada served during the Civil War. Tejada investigates his friend's murder, certain at first of who did it but unsure as to why. Meanwhile, Viviana's lover Gonzalo, a loyalist soldier severely injured in battle, is released from the hospital to the news of her death and vows to find the man who killed her, though emerging from hiding will risk his own life. The rest of the narrative alternates between Tejada's search for the truth and Gonzalo's search for Tejada.

When he visits the little girl's school, Tejada reminds the director he should have a Spanish flag in his office, along with a picture of Franco and posted words to the national anthem, but he offers the educator an out, suggesting the flag must have been burned by the Reds. Tejada is attracted to Maria Alejandra's teacher, Elena Fernández, a Nationalist sympathizer who is subsequently dismissed from her job because merely being questioned by the Guardia has made her politically suspicious. From their meeting gradually develops the romance of political opposites the reader might have anticipated earlier. Tejada and Elena find they both have connections to the university town of Salamanca, where he studied and her father was a professor.

The novel ends with the mystery solved but Tejada and Elena separated, their relationship calculatedly unresolved. Purely as a whodunit, the book is nothing exceptional, but as an exploration of its time and place, it is remarkable. One might carp about the occasional narrative cliché ("burst into tears," "exchanged glances") or politically correct anachronism ("chalkboard" for "blackboard,"), but generally the telling is fluid and graceful.

Tejada's first case has surprisingly little specific comment on the merits of the political situation in Spain but is more about the atmosphere of fear, mutual distrust, and distorted personal relationships that develop in such an environment. Pawel makes it clear there are decent people and knaves, true believers and pragmatists, on both sides of the divide. In her second novel, however, the stakes become clearer as the true face of fascism is displayed in sharper relief.

Courtesy of Soho

Law of Return
by Rebecca C. Pawel
Soho, 274 pp., $24

Law of Return opens in the summer of 1940, over a year after the action of the first book. Tejada, now promoted to lieutenant, and Corporal Jiménez have commandeered a first-class carriage on the train to their new posting in Salamanca. Part of Tejada's new job is performing weekly interviews with a group of "parolees," suspicious characters kept under government surveillance, one of whom proves to be Elena Fernández's classics-professor father. When she accompanies her father to his weekly meeting, the pair unexpectedly meet again.

Another parolee, Manuel Arroyo Díaz, a law professor from whom Tejada took a class in his university days, has gone missing. Arroyo, along with Elena's father, was one of four Salamanca professors who lost their university posts over a petition they signed in support of a colleague. Though the four professors are fictional, their protest was in reaction to a real event: the removal of Miguel de Unamuno from his post as rector of the University of Salamanca in 1936 after insulting Falangist General Millán de Astray. When a murder victim, found bludgeoned to death at a warehouse under renovation, is identified as Arroyo, Tejada doubts the body is really his.

In search of Arroyo, who he believes has faked his own death and fled the country, Tejada travels to Biarritz in Nazi-occupied France. There he again unexpectedly encounters Elena, who has gone to aid the escape of Joseph Meyer, a German Jew who is a family friend. When Tejada meets Meyer, he seems never to have encountered a Jew and to view him as an alien creature. Still, he helps Meyer to escape into Spain and offers him a strategy to save himself in the event he is found without identity papers. Under the 1924 Law of Return, he can claim descent from Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain centuries before and thus gain Spanish citizenship.

The mystery is brought to a satisfactorily dramatic and surprising conclusion. The personal story of Tejada and Elena proceeds along happy lines, though briefly derailed by the kind of boy-meets-girl-boy-loses-girl misunderstanding that is exasperating in fiction. The direction of their relationship at the end of the book opens the way for unlimited sequels.

Rebecca Pawel is a writer to watch. Her instincts will delight those readers who value intelligence over fireworks. Both novels have a continuous sense of menace but little in the way of contrived action scenes or choreographed suspense set-pieces. Instead, Pawel depicts the personal friction between fully fleshed and credibly motivated characters that produces much more satisfactory fictional conflict. ♦

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Parody

"Long before Ronald Reagan died, an unprecedented lobbying campaign began to keep his name alive. There is already a Mount Reagan, a USS Ronald Reagan, and a slew of Ronald Reagan schools and thoroughfares. . . . 'He defeated the most significant threat to liberty in America's history, the Soviet Union. He turned around the economy to sustained growth,' said Grover Norquist, the tax-fighting chief cheerleader for the Reagan commemoration project. 'We want one thing in each county.'"

—Washington Post, June 6, 2004

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thought Hoover wasn't a very attractive name for a dam anyway," Norquist continued. "He was a Democrat in sheep's clothing."

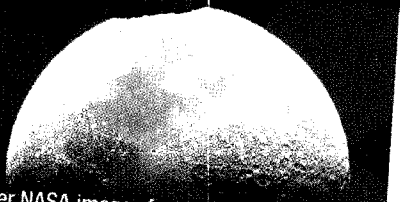
Norquist permitted himself a smile when he described how the Republican majority in Congress pressured the state of Rhode Island, facing bankruptcy in late 2007, to change its name to Rhode Reagan. "We made it attractive to them," he said. "If they'd balked at renaming Providence 'Meese,' that would have been a deal-breaker."

But with a Reagan Highway in every major city in the country five years after the late president's death, I ask, isn't his work complete?

"You're forgetting Detroit," said Norquist. "Only gave us half a name. Martin Luther Reagan Drive is better than nothing, but we're hoping it'll be Martin Wilson Reagan by this time next year. I wouldn't bet my bottom reagan on it, but we'll see . . . ."

REAGANING IRAQ

While denying he had anything to do with the decision made in Iraq last spring to rename the country the Iraqi Reaganite Republic, Norquist admits that re-baptizing the Philippines the Ronaldines in late 2005 "may have got them to put their thinking caps on. Sometimes you've got to hold these people by the hand and make them see reason. Anyone who thinks Niagara was a good name for a waterfall



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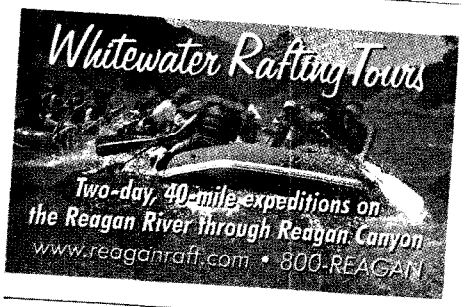

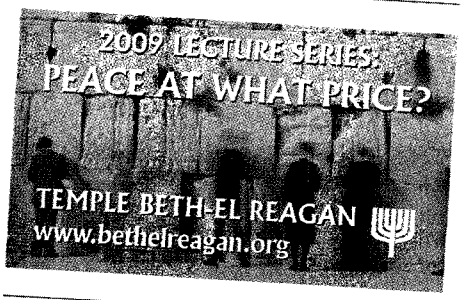

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A Changed World

The war on terror is a war we cannot—and will not—lose.

I cannot emphasize too strongly the danger and extent of the challenge we are facing. We are engaged in a long and bitter war. Our enemies will not simply sit back and watch as we make progress toward prosperity and peace in the world.

In the long run, the most important aspect of the Iraq war will be what it means for the integrity of the international system and for the effort to deal effectively with terrorism. Failure is not an option.

Strength and diplomacy go together. They are not alternatives; they are complements. . . . With the consequences of a terrorist attack as hideous as they are, the United States must be ready to preempt identified threats, not at the last moment, when an attack is imminent and more difficult to stop, but before the terrorist gets in position to do irreparable harm.

—George P. Shultz

The Long Haul

Helping Iraq to establish a free and democratic society is the most important task our nation will face for years to come.

Nothing in this decade will so test our purpose and fiber as a nation, and our ability to change the world for the better, than our willingness to stand with the people of Iraq over the long haul as they seek to build a free and democratic country.

The overriding question that will confront the United States—as the inevitable leader of a supporting coalition for democracy in this region—is whether we have the vision and the backbone to see this through, in the face of mounting costs in lives and dollars.

If we withdraw prematurely from Iraq, the scenarios will range from the creation of a new base for international terrorism—Afghanistan with oil—to a regionally driven civil war, a hellish combination of Lebanon and the Congo.

—Larry Diamond

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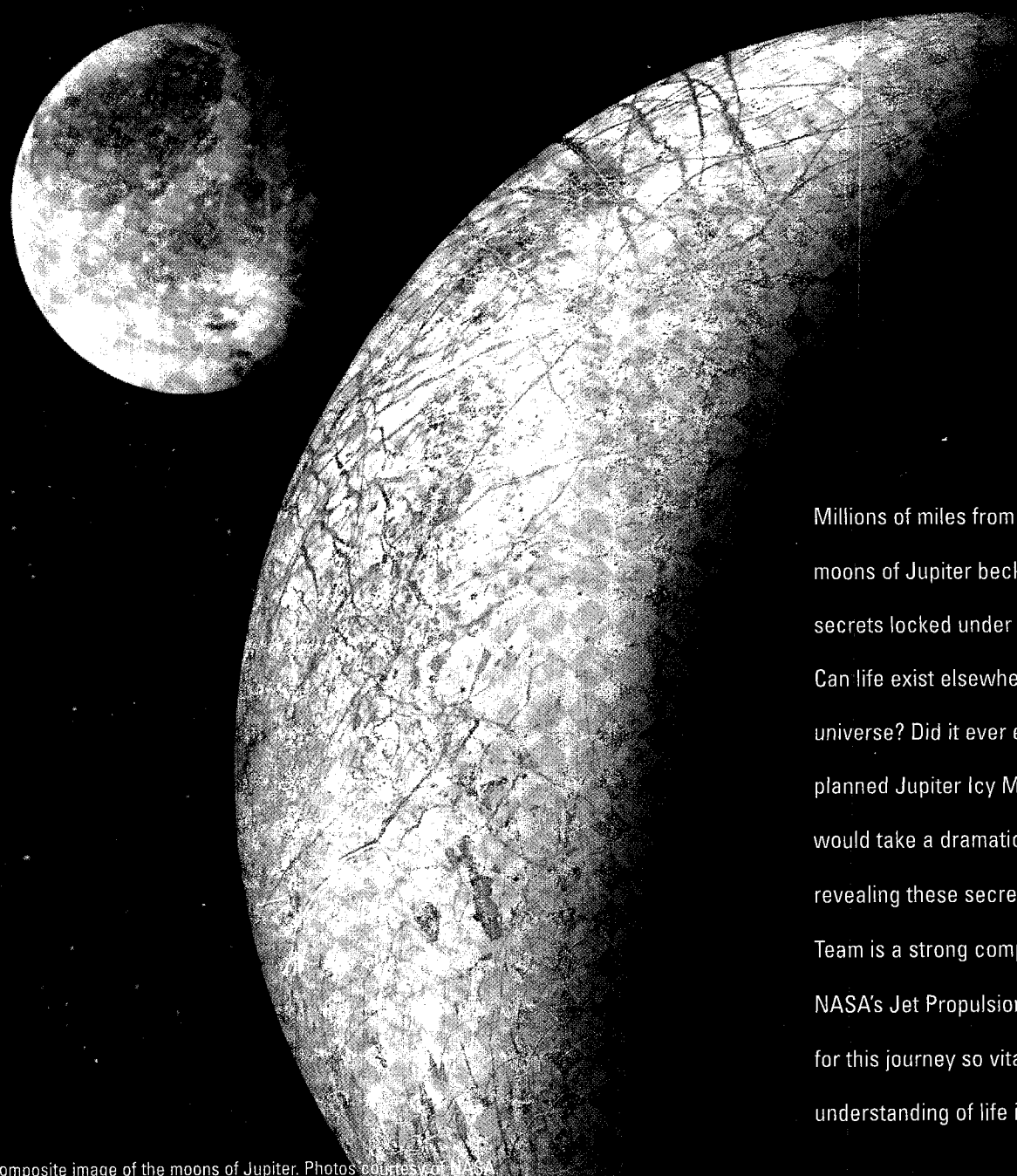

Millions of miles from Earth, the moons of Jupiter beckon us with secrets locked under their icy crusts. Can life exist elsewhere in the universe? Did it ever exist? NASA's planned Jupiter Icy Moons Orbiter would take a dramatic first step to revealing these secrets. The Boeing Team is a strong complement to NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory for this journey so vital to our understanding of life itself.

Composite image of the moons of Jupiter. Photos courtesy of NASA

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